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CLEMENTINA BEDFORD.

A NOVEL.

PRICE THREE SHILLINGS.

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CLEMENTINA BEDFORD.

A NOVEL.

IN

LETTERS AND NARRATIVE.

BY

J. J. CAMBON.

Man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR H. D. SYMONDS, NO. 21, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

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PREFACE.

WHEN we consider the evil tendency of many modern Novels; and the great, but necessary, caution observed by Parents, in admitting this species of literature into their families; we are led to offer a few observations on the *characters* which form this Production; that those who wish for amusement, blended with instruction; for interesting incident, divested of miraculous fiction; may select, among others, the Memoirs of CLEMENTINA BEDFORD.

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This young Lady, in the early part of her life, enjoyed every terrene comfort, under the roof of an indulgent parent: happineſs and affluence appeared to be her inevitable portion. But, ere she ſuſpected, that adverſity was the common lot of almoſt every individual—for a ſeaſon at leaſt—the melancholy truth was imparted to her, in the moſt unqueſtionable shape.

Clementina had a *Brother*, whoſe folly brought deſtruction on himſelf, and diſgrace on his family, at a period when she was about to receive an *increaſe* of happineſs. At this ſolemn moment, she manifeſts a delicacy, a ſelf-denial, a ſtedfaſtneſs, which calls for admira-

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miration; while it shews, that however intricate and thorny the paths are which lead to human felicity, they are nevertheless to be passed, if *Virtue* be the guide.

The sad fate of HENRY BEDFORD, will prove a salutary antidote to impetuosity of temper and libertinism. Young Gentlemen, if they condescend to read this Novel, will not be disgusted with tedious reasoning, nor the starch severity of parental reproof. They may also peruse, with momentary pleasure, the adventures of a daring libertine; but the satisfaction must cease, as the flames kindle which consume him.

There

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There never was a villain, ſays *Richardſon*, that had not an excuſe, in his own mind, for whatever crime he committed. So Henry Bedford runs from one imprudent ſtep to another, in the midſt of the moſt praiſe-worthy reſolutions.

In the character of this impetuous young man, if there is much to condemn, there is alſo ſomething to lament. But, with regard to his ſeducer VALCOURT, the contrary ſentiment prevails. *He* is the very archetype of *Satan*, moſt ſpeciouſly cloathed. And, however abominable he may appear, the leading incidents in his Life are from FACTS!—If this be admitted, on the

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the authority of the Author — and why should his veracity be questioned? —it is more than probable, nay it is certain, that the world abounds with others of the same description. How necessary, then—we will not say, how praise-worthy, how humane!—to pluck off the mask that conceals his deformity; that the Henry Bedfords of the present moment, may escape the dangers of their unfortunate predecessor.

The *Younger Edward* is a man of fortune, who, loving a beautiful and accomplished, though an unfortunate, Lady, preserves his ardour and his constancy, through every shocking vicissitude of her fate. Unconnaminated by

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the prevailing vices of the age, he places happineſs in the alleviation of human miſery; and in thoſe amuſements which moſt others, of his rank and education, would look on, though unjuſtly, with diſdain.

Dorval is a *Friend*, that but rarely appears on the extended theatre of life!

Julia, alſo, very ably ſupports a ſimilar character; and is no leſs an ornament to her ſex, than to human nature.

Mr. *Bedford* and the *Elder Edward*, exhibit an important lesson to the

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the Avaricious, who compute the thousands, not the felicity, which a matrimonial alliance will produce. An adherence to the line of conduct which these worthy *parents* pursued — would greatly tend to diminish those scandalous cases of infidelity, which are so frequently recorded in our several courts of law, both ecclesiastical and civil.

In this assemblage of character, the most perfect model of virtue and goodness is to be discovered. Villainy and hypocrisy are delineated in glowing colours: and the Reader, having, thus, the mischiefs of the one, and the advantages of the other, so clearly pointed out, can possess neither sense

nor

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nor feeling, if he hesitates which to copy.

If, therefore, we should fail to entertain, let us hope that the deficiency will be supplied by our zeal to enlighten and improve; and to furnish *experience*, without the risk of *life* or *property*, or *happiness*.

CLEMENTINA

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CLEMENTINA BEDFORD.

LETTER I.

EDWARD TO DORVAL.

WHAT a ſorrowful moment was it, my friend, when fate compelled us to ſeparate! Thoſe amuſements which were once ſo delightful, have loſt their faſcinating influence. Has then our cruel deſtiny divided us! we, who, in concert, explored the noble paths of literature and of ſcience; we, who shared each other's joy, and each adverſity; we, who communicated the ſecrets of our hearts, confeſſing mutually every error, and imparting each improvement of the mind! All, all, that I now behold, removed, as I am, from your preſence, is devoid of pleaſure.

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My father will reſide ſome months in England, where we have ſeveral relations yet living. I ſhall count the days, the hours, and even the minutes, as they ſlowly paſs, till I receive a letter from you. However, agreeably to my promiſe, I ſhall give you a detail of all that may occur, worthy of notice, during our journey.

We are now at the country-houſe of Mr. Bedford, where we ſhall remain for a few days. In the ſolitary groves that ſurround this manſion, I recal to memory thoſe agreeable, thoſe inſtructive converſations with which we beguiled the hours during the progreſs of our ſtudies. Mr. Bedford, on our arrival, ſhed tears of joy; and my father ran to his embrace, after an abſence of twenty years. They were educated together; and, from an early age, commenced that affection, which neither time, nor ſeparation, nor any of thoſe eventful, trying ſcenes, which ſo often impair the human faculties, have been able

to

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to diminish. Our venerable friend, by a successful course of merchandise, had acquired a handsome fortune; a merited solace in his declining years; but which he has considerably diminished, from a too fond regard for a degenerate son, whose extravagance and impetuosity of temper have produced the most lamentable effects. Two years since, he engaged in a fatal duel, leaving his adversary dead on the field; and, justly dreading the consequences that would ensue, effected his escape, and has never been heard of since, although the enquiries and researches of the noble-minded old man, have been incessant. This afflicting circumstance has imprinted the traces of sorrow on his benignant countenance. There is, however, some consolation for him yet remaining; he has a daughter, whose virtues and accomplishments are a theme of admiration. This lovely young lady, who has attained her nineteenth year, is at present absent on a journey which she has un-

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dertaken in the company of her uncle and aunt Murville to L..... Two months was the time allotted for her continuance there; but her worthy father has already been deprived of her sweet converse three weeks beyond the prescribed period. He will not permit us to depart, till she returns; and I must confess that, to me, it is no unpleasant constraint.

I am charmed with this rural retreat; it possesses more natural attractions than the most magnificent building in the world. Represent to yourself, my friend, a spacious kitchen-garden, that contains an immensity of useful plants, and vegetables and fruit enough to feed a multitude; and which, in good truth, is rendered beneficial to many a needy family, who greet their benefactor with their thanks! Imagine a sequestered bower, where the most agreeable stilness reigns! This morning, repairing thither, ere the Sun shone forth in all his splen-

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ſplendour, I was ſaluted with the variegated and delightful warblings of a thouſand feathered choriſters.

Ah! Dorval, were you but preſent, what pleaſure ſhould we enjoy! But the late hour calls me to repoſe: be aſſured, however, that my heart is wholly conſecrated to our mutual friendship.

April 2, 179.

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LETTER II.

EDWARD TO DORVAL.

WHAT a pleasant, what a charming silence, reigns around this secluded mansion! Here, where the noise and bustle of the world do not intrude, every vegetative object---the glorious workmanship of the Almighty!---is calculated to excite astonishment: every plant, every flower, however mean and diminutive at first, approaches, every day, every hour, to a fuller state of perfection, and hastens to embellish a landscape, that will exceed all the admired productions of the pencil. Could you, my friend, share with me the pleasures of this sylvan scene, I should esteem myself supremely happy!

The good Mr. Bedford yesterday received a letter from his lovely daughter:

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the excessive joy that he felt on this occasion, is scarcely to be described. She will return to his paternal embraces in the course of eight days; she, who now forms his only solace! My father, at the particular request of his friend, has consented to remain here three or four weeks longer than he had intended. Already do I presage to myself the joy, the embraces, with which this revered father will receive his amiable child: and, shall I to you my whole heart unfold; shall I to you confess, my dear friend; how much I am elated at the idea of being honoured with her acquaintance!

To-day we had the satisfaction of relieving an oppressed family, who were languishing in a state of the bitterest poverty imaginable; and who, without our help, might possibly have perished in confinement. The adventure is too striking to be omitted.

Mr.

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Mr. Bedford, my father, and I, took a walk, after dinner; and, straying towards a wood, we heard, at a small distance from us, the broken accents of a child, who was invoking Heaven to release his unfortunate father, and to relieve his poor mother, who was starving. We instantly approached the place from whence the sound issued, and beheld a boy, who seemed to be about nine or ten years of age, sitting at the foot of a tree, his hands clasped together, and his eyes, surcharged with tears, directed towards Heaven. Our friend Bedford, with his accustomed humanity, asked the youth, What ailed him. 'Ah! good Sir,' he replied, 'my 'father is imprisoned, and my poor mo-'ther has eat nothing these two days.'--- 'What crime has your father committed,' said Bedford. 'None,' replied the boy: 'he could not pay the rent of our small 'cot, when it was due. The landlord 'seized our furniture; which not being 'enough to discharge the debt, he had 'the cruelty to cast my dear father into

'gaol.

'gaol.----Ah, gentlemen! were I but some-
'what older, I could work for my good
'parents: they love me tenderly! But,
'alas! I am unable to help them out
'of their misery; and every-one is
'deaf to my sorrow!'---'We are not,'
said Bedford. 'Lead us to your mother;
'where is she? where is your father
'confined? We will deliver them from
'the hand of persecution.' 'They are
'in the next town, D.....,' answered the
child. 'My mother having no habita-
'tion to keep her from the cold, begged
'permission to continue with my father;
'where, by spinning, she endeavoured to
'earn a little: but her strength has for-
'saken her.'

This poor lad, intuitively hissing our hands, joyfully conducted us to the prison. O! my friend! how poignantly was my heart affected at seeing the guiltless old man, sitting on a stool, and his wife leaning her dejected head upon his breast: near them lay a small piece of bread,

bread, and a pitcher of water. When this miserable couple saw us enter, a deadly paleness overspread their faces; their minds, habituated to sorrow, foreboded new afflictions. But the youth, casting his arms round the necks of his parents, eagerly exclaimed, 'Ah, father! 'and my mother dear! be comforted! See, 'these gentlemen come to help you; they 'will make you happy!' I could not suppress the starting tear:——O Dorval, what sweet consolation is there in possessing a heart that is not callous to the tender duties of humanity!

'Yes,' said Bedford, 'we are come 'to release you both from this miserable 'abode. Tell us briefly your story; you 'may rely upon our compassion.' The unfortunate pair fell on their knees, overcome by an excess of gratitude; they kissed our hands, and bedewed them with tears. We raised them up; and, after a short silence, the poor man spoke as follows,

'I was

'I was a shoemaker at ....., where, 'by industry and perseverance, I had 'saved a little; when a person who 'owed me a large sum, becoming in-'solvent, I found myself necessitated to 'leave my business, and the town: my 'goods were sold by the creditors, while 'I hoped to begin anew in this place. 'But, alas! gentlemen, being unable to 'obtain employment, the little which we 'had saved from the general wreck was 'in a short time consumed; and while I 'occasionally worked as a porter, my 'wife applied herself to the spinning-'wheel, hoping by these means to pro-'cure a livelihood. Alas! our united 'endeavours were insufficient; and we 'fell into the bitterest stage of poverty, 'insomuch that we were unable to pay 'our house-rent. I was three months in 'arrears; and the landlord, unpitying 'our deplorable situation, turned us into 'the street, seizing at the same time our 'remaining houshold necessaries. But 'these, being sold to the worst advan-

'tage,

'tage, he urged yet further claims, and 'had the cruelty to imprison me, saying 'that I had wantonly injured his house. 'See, in short, gentlemen, the untoward-'ness of my destiny: my wife, having 'no friendly roof to cover her, has fol-'lowed me hither; and for this indulg-'ence I am indebted to the humanity of 'the gaoler. Here, helpless, forlorn, and 'hungry, are we left! Here, too, has 'that dear child accompanied us; bring-'ing his mother, now and then, that little 'which he supplicates from the hand of 'Charity!'

'What is the amount of your 'debt?' demanded the good Bedford.—'Three pounds!' answered the unfortunate man. He gave him that sum, saying: 'See there, good man, you have 'enough to satisfy your inhuman credi-'tor; besides which, you may yet ex-'pect some further marks of our com-'passion.' My father took a five pound bank-note out of his pocket-book, and gave

gave it to the poor woman, telling her it would ſerve to purchaſe them ſome neceſſaries: and, turning to her husband, he ſaid, That, in the courſe of a few days, when he had regained his liberty, and ſettled his affairs, he should come to the houſe of Mr. Bedford; when he might expect ſome further aid, provided that he had related nothing but truth.

What pleaſure, my friend, enjoyed my heart, at beholding the extatic tranſports of this unfortunate couple; and the expreſſive geſtures of their dutiful child! a ſatisfaction that you may conceive, but which I cannot adequately deſcribe.

When we left the priſon, we repaired to the village where this family had reſided, and, after the minuteſt enquiries, we found, to our perfect ſatisfaction, that they bore the beſt of characters, and that they had not in any inſtance deceived us. I know that you will participate with me in this event.

April 19, 179.

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LETTER III.

DORVAL TO EDWARD.

YOU know my heart, dear Edward; and therefore may easily imagine what a feeling share I take in every thing that concerns you. I confess, I should like to live in that solitude which you so ably describe: for, alas! in large cities, what else meets the eye, than villainy, falsehood, and vice, of every degree!

The King has conferred on me a post of considerable weight; but it is an office wholly unfitted to the mildness of my disposition, and I have therefore a great dislike to it. It may possibly be my lot to pass sentence on some unfortunate mortal, accused of a crime which he did not commit; and to release a criminal unfit to live.

Other

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Other motives, than those of justice, sometimes occasion a prosecution; and other allurements, than those of truth, but too often impel men to bear false witness against their neighbour. This appointment will, I am afraid, do violence to my feelings; however, I shall endeavour to temper justice with mercy, when occasion offers, and to discriminate between misfortunes and crimes. I have now a case before me, at which my heart bleeds; but I will not enter on the melancholy subject, lest it should rob you of an agreeable moment. I shall reserve it till another opportunity.

I can picture to myself your feelings on witnessing the deliverance of the poor family, whose sufferings you so pathetically narrate. I, also, am not unaffected, although I have not the pleasure of knowing these worthy mortals.

I deeply participate in the gloomy event mentioned in your first letter. I lament, with Mr. Bedford, the loss of his son.

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The affair has made a great noiſe here; and it is reported, that the rash young man is ſecreted in a neighbouring county. Heaven grant, for his father's ſake, that he may not be diſcovered! for the relations of the deceaſed Knight have great influence at Court; and, in the preſent inſtance, I hear, they are well diſpoſed to exert it.

What a melancholy tragedy was it for the venerable old man and his lovely daughter! I am agoniſed when I reflect on the probable conſequences which may reſult from this inglorious ſacrifice to miſtaken honour. It is a dreadful poſſibility, that this worthy father may have to lament the untimely death of his ſon, on the fatal ſcaffold! But I muſt ſtop: I will not torture my heart, and that of my friend, with theſe painful forebodings.

I have many friends at Court. Could I, by their means, obtain a pardon for this unhappy young man, what tranſporting joy ſhould I not feel in reſtoring him to his good

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good father! for whom every one drops the tear of compaſſion.

My earneſt endeavours shall not be wanting; and thus may he cherish ſome diſtant hope, at leaſt, of ſeeing his ſon once more under his roof.

Write to me often, Edward. Forgive my paſt ſilence. The weighty concerns of my new poſt prevent my ſaying more at preſent.

April 16, 179.

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LETTER IV.

EDWARD TO DORVAL.

THE post that has been given you, my friend, is of less value than your deserts. It is in the discharge of those functions, that your exalted understanding will appear. Happy would it be for the truly unfortunate, if all judges could distinguish like you!

Yesterday the charming CLEMENTINA—this is the name of our friend's daughter—returned to the arms of her affectionate father, after a long absence. What transports did he express, on again embracing this amiable young lady! My heart shared in his felicity; and, indeed, felt a pleasing something, that was a stranger to it before.

Shall

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Shall I tell you, Dorval, that she is loveliness itself! How fortunate is Mr. Bedford, to have at least one child who bears him the tenderest regard; while the folly of the other wounds his sensibility! The worthy man, taking Clementina by the hand, approached my father, saying: 'See 'here, my dear child, the best of my friends. 'He will be your second parent, when the 'thread of my life shall be cut asunder by 'increasing cares. He will be your pro-'tector!'

The dear girl, dissolving in tears, flew into the arms of her father. She could not utter a single word. My father addressed her: 'Be comforted, my dear Clementina; 'your parent shall not yet be snatched from 'you. No! Heaven will not leave you 'fatherless in your youth, while the hand 'of affliction is heavy on you. We shall 'endeavour to alleviate the anguish which 'he feels on your brother's behalf; and 'indeed, from something that has just 'occurred, I have hopes that he will

'shortly

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'shortly obtain a pardon. Our utmost 'exertions shall be tried to bring it about; 'and then, yes then, shall that deluded 'young man, resolving never to err more, 'throw himself at the feet of his fa'ther. You and your brother shall yet be 'happy together. He shall return to you, 'and to virtue; and, having such a mir'ror of purity constantly before his eyes, 'he will never more be overcome by the 'impetuous sallies of youth.——Let us, 'for the present let us, be mirthful in 'this agreeable solitude.'

Mr. Bedford cheerfully gave his consent; and invited some gentlemen and ladies who reside in the neighbourhood, to join us in the evening. They accepted his offer; and, with this agreeable party, we amply realised the wishes of my father. Clementina added considerably to the sprightliness of the conversation; her wit was brilliant, and her humour incomparable. Yes, Dorval, nature and education have jointly conspired to exalt her above the

rest

reſt of her ſex! My pen is incapable of conveying to you a juſt idea either of her mental accomplishments, or her perſonal charms!

Drawing is one of her favourite amuſements; and you know, my friend, that I have practiſed in that art. Clementina has shewn me ſeveral of her sketches; which, in my opinion, are entitled to the higheſt commendation.

Somebody opens the door of my apartment!—It is the father of Clementina! ſome tears rolling down his aged cheeks. What can it mean? Forgive me that I conclude: to-morrow you shall know the reſult.

April 21, 179.

LETTER

LETTER V.

EDWARD TO DORVAL.

IN CONTINUATION.

THE letter which you wrote me, respecting the son of Mr. Bedford, I have given him to read; and he dropped some tears as he perused it.——Ah! my friend! could you aid the worthy man in his endeavours to obtain the pardon of this youth, it would call him to new life.

While I was employed in writing my last to you, he came into my chamber, as I then intimated, the tears starting in his eyes. 'Edward,' said he, 'I depart 'to-morrow, at day-break, for T..... My 'sister Murville is coming, to tarry here a 'few days. In her company; with your 'father, and Clementina; I trust that you 'will

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'will enjoy some pleasant hours. My 'absence will be of short continuance. I 'am now sanguine in the hope, that Henry 'will shortly be pardoned: your friend's 'influence will give effect to a petition 'which I purpose to offer. I will also 'endeavour, by supplications, to soften the 'anger of the deceased Knight's kindred. 'Possibly the tears of a grey-haired father 'will mitigate their resentment!'

O, Dorval! what affection does he yet feel for this son, who is so little worthy his fond regard! But, for Bedford's sake, let me entreat you to exert your utmost power. Clementina, my father, and lastly your friend, will always acknowledge your goodness with thankfulness and gratitude.

We passed the time at dinner in deep silence: hopes and fears alternately possessed our bosoms, and suspended, for a while, the ordinary course of speech.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Murville arrived in the evening. She appears not only to be a worthy woman, but to possess a great portion of understanding. Towards night, as is my custom, I walked in the garden, taking a book in my hand; and, wholly engrossed by the subject of my author, I proceeded, unheedful of my steps, till I found myself in a sequestered bower, where all was still, except the gentle rustling of the trees. Casting my eyes toward the extremity of this shady alcove, good Heaven! how was I struck on seeing the lovely Clementina sitting on a bench! Holding a handkerchief to her face, she often sobbed the name of 'Henry!' At length she perceived me. I was unable to utter a single word: for never did she appear so charming in my eyes as at this moment!

Is it alone friendship that I feel for this adorable girl? Speak, my heart! speak! Yes, it is a more exalted sensation. I thought you proof against these silken bands of slavery; but it was an illusion of

the

the senses. I love! It cannot be disguised. And why should I disavow my passion, when everybody admires and esteems the object of it? She, alone, is formed to render me the happiest of men.—Ah! my dear friend! her sorrow; the tears, that from her fine eyes rolled; her hair, loose about her neck, in wavy ringlets flowing; her whole attitude; pictured to me the attributes of a divinity! I attempted to speak, but the words receded on my lips.

'What are you reading, Sir?' asked Clementina. 'An Essay on Friendship,
'Madam,' answered I, stammering. 'It
'is a noble subject,' said she: 'but, alas!
'how rarely do [illegible] nd it in adversity!
'The empty [illegible] d, is reta[illegible] but
'the friend [illegible] y, too o[illegible] ur,
'removes [illegible], wh[illegible] le-
'viate t[illegible] affli[illegible] an-
'guish [illegible]
'[illegible] effio[illegible]
'th[illegible] the

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'then do you hold an invaluable treasure, 'though you only enjoy a single friend. 'But trust not, Sir, to any one of whose 'integrity there appears the smallest doubt. 'You are young; you possess riches, rank, 'and a liberal mind. Such attractions as 'these but too generally induce a crowd of 'low-minded sycophants, falsely called 'friends, who assume the name to disguise 'their unworthy purposes.

'Alas! Sir: my brother had a heart, 'capable of the noblest purposes: but 'he wanted a friend, to lead him from the 'corrupted regions of dissipation. Then 'he had never seen those dangers which 'have nearly destroyed him; then had my 'dear father never lost a beloved son; nor 'I a brother! But now, what have we to 'expect from him but shame and dis-'grace!'

After this, she shed a flood of tears; and, by an imperceptible kind of sympathy, I felt myself equally affected; in fine, we wept

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wept in concert. Nothing could I ſay, to ſoften her ſorrow: but, ſeizing her hand, I kiſſed it with emotion. She aroſe from the ſeat, and entreated me to lead her back to the ſaloon; and, as we paſſed, she renewed her obſervations on Friendship. She ſpoke of a ſtrict union that had long ſubſiſted between her and a young lady, named Julia ***, who was, indeed, she ſaid, her only confidant; and of whom she mentioned ſome circumſtances, much to the credit of that fair-one. Having diſcovered indubitable ſigns of faithfulneſs in her friend, she was perfectly convinced that she had formed a valuable connexion.

When we entered the houſe, I found there the worthy family, whom my father and Mr. Bedford had reſcued from approaching deſtruction, as I mentioned in a former letter. This old man was releaſed in two days after we ſaw him in the priſon. He had, with the little that we gave him, paid his landlord, and placed himſelf in a ſtate to purſue his buſineſs with ſpirit and effect.

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The boy dropped tears of gladness and gratitude; the father and mother begged permission to kiss our hands; protested that we had made them happy; and apologised for omitting their acknowledgments so long, saying it arose from a desire of convincing us that they had applied our bounty to a proper purpose.

My father offered them some further aid, agreeably to his promise; but they refused to receive it, even on the most pressing solicitations. The good man observed, that his misfortunes, having been attended by no premeditated acts of dishonesty, had at length excited the compassion of his neighbours; that they had promised to employ and to recommend him; and that therefore, if he failed in his industry, he should deserve the worst that could befal him.

What expanded ideas, what generosity, do we sometimes find in men of this description, who are but too often viewed by the affluent with contempt!

I briefly

I briefly related the adventure to Clementina, who took the child in her arms, and kindly embraced him. Amiable minds are not restrained from manifesting their admiration of virtue, wherever it appears.

At length, the worthy family took leave of us, shewing every demonstrable token of acknowledgment.—The remainder of the night was passed somewhat uncheerfully, the time for parting with the venerable Bedford being nearly arrived. It is now past midnight; all is involved in the silence of the hour; and it is necessary that I also retire to my pillow. You know the heart of your friend.

April 22, 179.

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LETTER VI.

DORVAL TO EDWARD.

REJOICE, my friend! Comfort Clementina! I have already received from Court the pardon of the young Bedford; the relations of the deceased Knight having consented to withdraw the prosecution which they had commenced against him.

I am informed, that Lieut. Adelclar, has discovered the unhappy fugitive; and it is confidently said, that he entered into the army under a feigned name. I hope to see the good Mr. Bedford to-day, that I may communicate it to him.

You love Clementina, my friend!—— Well, now, is she not worthy of you? And are you not capable of making her happy?

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What satisfaction, what delight, will attend your union with a young lady, in whom is concentred all the graces and all the virtues of the sex! You cannot be deceived in one, who, removed from the alluring seductions of fashionable circles, has been educated under the eye of a worthy and prudent father; she can be no otherwise than amiable. What greater felicity, then, can your parents taste, than to see those hearts united, that were fashioned for each other! Then, then, will they enjoy the supremest of fatherly comforts.——What a glorious prospect opens to the sight! My only wish is to be an eye-witness of your domestic tranquillity: you will afford a testimony to the world, that genuine content may be eminently enjoyed without the glitter of pomp and magnificence, and that equality of riches are not essential to connubial harmony and heart-felt love.

You delight, Edward, in solitude! My heart, also, pants for a similar enjoyment. Nothing, now, but retirement, can

render

render life ſupportable! You know who was long the object of my ſincereſt regard: alas! death ſnatched her from me, juſt at the moment that we had appointed to meet at the altar. O heaven! had the grim tyrant, at the ſame inſtant, united me with her, then had my troubled boſom never felt the pangs of diſappointment. But it is reſerved for me, ever to mourn my Junia. I am diſguſted with all around me. Nothing but ſolitude and ſilence can afford me comfort. I am a prey to grief. Now do I ſtand in need of you; now do I miſs the conſolation of your preſence. But I muſt conclude; my official duty demands my attention. Think often on my ſufferings.

April 23, 179.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

EDWARD TO DORVAL.

RECEIVE the acknowledgments of the tender Clementina, of my father, Mrs. Murville, and of your friend. What extasy will illumine the soul of Mr. Bedford, when he shall be informed of the magnitude of your success! Nothing was wanting to render him happy but the forgiveness and the presence of Henry. To-morrow we expect a welcome letter from him. Ah! had you also been fortunate, what transports would have revelled in the heart of your friend!

April 26, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER VIII.

MR. BEDFORD TO CLEMENTINA.

SHARE in the joy of your affectionate father! Your brother's crime is cancelled. Embrace the worthy Mrs. Murville for me; and present my acknowledgments to our two worthy friends. To the noble Dorval we owe every-thing. I enjoin you to communicate these testimonies of a fatherly heart.

April 24, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER IX.

CLEMENTINA TO JULIA.

HENRY will be restored to us again! O Julia! what heart-cheering news was this for your tender friend! My pen is too weak to convey you a true idea of what I felt, and yet continue to feel, on account of this fortunate event. Shall I, then, once more see my brother! him, whom I always lamented with the true sorrow of a sister, never ceasing to hope for his return to virtue. I already anticipate the pleasure of beholding him run to the outstretched arms of his parent, whose satisfaction will be unbounded.

Sir James Dorval, the friend of the noble-minded Edward, procured us his pardon. Oh! that my brother, Julia, had been

been ſuch an Edward!---May he henceforth regulate all his actions by the touchſtone of genuine honour, and prudence! How happy will your Clementina then eſteem herſelf!——May I cherish this hope? O yes! And if my prayers can any-thing avail, his mind shall reſist every new temptation. His heart is ſuſceptible to good impreſſions; he will not hesitate to shun the profligate Valcourt, who has once led him to the brink of human miſery. Yes, he shall leave him for ever. I will fall at Henry's feet, and ſupplicate him to accept my counſel; perhaps the tears and the entreaties of a proſtrate ſiſter will facilitate his repentance. Then shall he regain every one's eſteem; yes, Julia, then shall all his paſt miſdeeds be buried in oblivion. Ah! should I obtain the victory, what joy will it communicate to my dear father, and to me! and what bleſſings will alſo devolve on Henry! It is commendable, never to have erred; but it is indeed much more praiſe-worthy to fly from vice, and its ſenſual allurements. But, alas! may the heavens not deceive me

in

in my expectations!—O Julia! how miſerable would you then ſee your Clementina! A ſecond shock would doubtleſs overcome my fortitude. I shudder, I freeze, at the dreadful idea. What a deadly ſtroke would it be to my dear father, whoſe health is already impaired, through Henry's indiſcretions! I am confident, that it would ſpeedily "bring his grey "hairs with ſorrow to the grave." But let me forbear. God is merciful; and he will protect us.

My aunt Murville has deſired me to aſſure you of her affection. This worthy woman is now with us, on a short viſit. Accept, alſo, the love of her who will always remain your ſincere friend.

April 28, 179.

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LETTER X.

DORVAL TO EDWARD.

READ the following letter, my friend! Fly with it to Clementina.—Mr. Bedford has not yet ſeen it; he was gone, before I received the agreeable intelligence.

May 8, 179.

ADELCLAR TO DORVAL.

Incloſed in the preceding.

YESTERDAY, while our regiment, which was ordered from R... to D....., were halting juſt without the town, I obſerved a richly-dreſſed young gentleman among the ſpectators, who ſeemed to have been taking the air. In a few moments, he turned back with uncommon emotion,

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on being noticed by a ſoldier in the ranks, who, a few months ſince, had enliſted in the company of Captain Duperonville. But my aſtonishment was much increaſed, at ſeeing this man haſtily follow the ſtranger. The diſtance at which he overtook him, was too great for me to diſtinguish their converſation. I, however, perceived the gentleman very earneſtly perſuading Duzant to receive a purſe of money, which he held in his hand, and which the other as earneſtly refuſed; taking, at the ſame time, a handkerchief from his pocket, to conceal the tokens of a burſting heart. The duty of the ſoldier would not permit them to diſcourſe long together; they parted, and the ſtranger was quickly out of ſight.

This evening we came to D.....; when, having choſen my lodgings, I ſent my ſervant to the quarters of Duzant, with orders that he should inſtantly attend me. In a short time he entered my chamber; when certain ideas which I had formed of this ſoldier, determined me to ſift him.—

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'Are you not afraid,' said I to him, 'to tell 'me your adventures? I noticed what 'happened to you this morning; and that, 'alone, convinces me that there is some-'thing remarkable in your story. Speak 'to me as to a friend!'

'Ah, Sir!' he replied, 'I have left, 'and have involved, an aged father, and 'a tender sister, in the extremest labyrinth 'of human misery; who probably yet be-'wail the uncertain fate of one who is 'unworthy their regard.—— Alas! Sir, 'I was not born to the humiliating garb 'which I now wear!'

Something like this I had expected. I wanted no more. 'Return, Sir,' said I, 'to that venerable father, to that affection-'ate sister. You may yet be fortunate. 'Do not disown yourself: the time, the 'circumstances, your mien, all convince 'me, that you are—Henry Bedford!'— At these words he turned pale; and ex-claiming, in a faltering tone, 'Am I, then, 'discover-

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'discovered?' he fell into a chair, in an agony that nearly deprived him of his faculties. 'Fear nothing,' said I. 'Throw 'yourself into the midst of your friends: 'they have stopped the prosecution which 'was instituted against you. Your father 'is impatient to see you once more. To-'morrow I will procure your discharge 'from the captain.'

You cannot imagine the happy effect, Sir James, which this harangue produced on the distempered senses of the young Bedford: his clouded countenance was instantly illuminated. I detained him to supper; after which he went home, giving me the strongest assurances of his gratitude, and promising to wait on me the next day. This morning I related the affair to Captain Duperonville, who generously sent the young gentleman his discharge from the regiment. At noon he came again to my lodgings, repeated his acknowledgments, and said he was going to return to his father.—

May 2, 179.

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LETTER XI.

EDWARD TO DORVAL.

FORGIVE my long silence, dear Dorval. The arrival of Henry Bedford, two days after the return of his father, has diffused among us a general joy. Indeed, from the information which the good Bedford brought us, he was by no means an unexpected guest.

Henry, having been told by Lieutenant Adelclar, that we were here on a visit, enquired first for my father, commanding the servant, who testified the most singular marks of satisfaction, not to be too hasty in making his arrival known. My father hasted to meet him; although, as yet, they were strangers to each other. The young man ran towards him; and, kissing his hand, exclaimed,

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exclaimed, 'I am the unworthy son of 'your friend, Sir! How is my father? my sister? Can I hope their forgiveness?'

'You may be assured of it,' said the good man: 'you shall again find the same 'father, the same sister, as before.'

Mr. Bedford over-heard the voice of his son: Mrs. Murville, Clementina; every one, hastened to congratulate him.——Oh! that you, Dorval, had beheld this extatic meeting! The adorable Clementina sunk under the excess of her transports; and it was a long time before the attentions of all around, could restore her to her wonted tranquillity of mind. But when it was happily effected, her affectionate father, herself, and even Henry, seemed to forget, or to rise superior to, all their former inquietudes. The latter demonstrated every possible indication of repentance and amendment, and related to us all that had befallen him, from the period of his fatal rencounter with the Knight, to the present moment.

'I was,'

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"I was," said he, "one evening, requested by Valcourt and Sir John *****, "to make one of a party at cards; to which "I unfortunately consented. It happened "that I won twenty guineas of the Knight, "at which he appeared to be highly ill-humoured; and appointed the next afternoon to resume the play. Sir John lost, "as before, but to a larger amount. "This "is too much, Bedford!" exclaimed he, "fiercely: "you have played false!" "Taking fire at these words, I hastily left "my chair; and approaching him, insisted "on his retracting what he had said, so injurious to my honour. "No!" exclaimed he, in the same tone as at first, "I shall rather repeat it!"

"I now perceived, alas! that nothing but blood could purge the foul stain "which my own imprudence had affixed "on me. Oh! that I had never played "with him! Then had there been no cause "for anger; no cries for revenge! Then "had I never been "without a habitation

"and

"and a name!" At length, a rencounter was resolved upon, which was to have place the following morning, at eight o'clock: Valcourt being to attend me, and one of the company the Knight. He gave me the choice of arms; and I chose the pistol.

Valcourt proposed that I should remain in his house for that night; where, in a circle of the giddy and the gay, we murdered the fleeting hours, till the moment arrived, that called me to perform one of the most unfortunate actions of my life. Scarcely had we reached the fatal spot, ere I beheld the approach of my antagonist. I gave him the choice of pistols. It fell to the Knight's lot to give the first fire; and scarcely was this advantage decided in his favour, when he burnt to pursue it. But, in consequence of his excessive eagerness, he fired without effect. Alas! the contrary was my fortune! I discharged my pistol; when the Knight fell lifeless on the ground.

Valcourt

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'Valcourt led me off the field, through 'a wood; while I ſcarcely knew how to 'regulate my footſteps. Having reached 'a coach and four, in waiting, which Val-'court had provided for the victor, we haſ-'tily ſprung into it; after he had com-'manded his ſervant to return to the fatal 'ſpot, and enquire if the Knight was really 'dead. We fled with the ſwiftneſs of an 'arrow, and travelled nearly the whole day 'in gloomy ſilence. My companion rail-'led me at length, ſaying, "You will "ſoon be in ſecurity! But ſurely you "muſt, inwardly at leaſt, rejoice at having "thus aſſerted your honour and your "innocence. By our friends you will be "eſteemed a hero. I thought, truly, that "you poſſeſſed more courage, than to "ſhrink from trifles ſuch as theſe." He 'endeavoured, I confeſs, to convince me 'that my conduct was meritorious: but, 'however grateful it might have appeared 'to another in my ſituation, I nevertheleſs 'began moſt heartily to deteſt his conver-'ſation. In fact, I was no more myſelf.

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'In the evening we reached a ſmall 'town, where Valcourt propoſed to ſtay 'for the night; aſſuring me that we were ſuf- 'ficiently removed from all danger. We 'ſelected the beſt inn which the place 'afforded; and I almoſt immediately re- 'tired to bed, hoping to repoſe---for ever! 'Sorrow, deſpair, and abhorrence, con- 'vulſed my ſoul; till at laſt, overcome by 'the exceſſes of the paſt night, and the 'horrors and fatigues of the ſucceeding 'day, I at laſt fell into profound ſleep. In 'this ſtate I continued, till late the next 'morning; when Valcourt awaked me, 'ſaying, that ſome urgent buſineſs, which 'had juſt occurred to his memory, obliged 'him to return back, and that he should 'ſet off at noon.

'O, heavens! what an awaking was 'this!——Now beheld I, more viſibly than 'ever, the extent of my folly; now did 'I perceive its pernicious effects!——I 'aroſe, however; and we breakfaſted to- 'gether. I promiſed Valcourt that I would

'correſpond

correſpond with him; and, at parting, he constrained me to receive a purſe, containing one hundred guineas. "Receive this from your friend!" ſaid he. "But banish your foolish ſorrow. Farewel!"

'Left now wholly alone, on what could I contemplate but my imprudence! I mourned my paſt dishonourable courſes; I deteſted myſelf. Often did I reſolve to end my wretched exiſtence; but as often failed my purpoſe: for the precepts of Chriſtianity were not totally obliterated from my mind. A thouſand horrible proſpects appeared before me. "How am I to procure a livelihood?" ſaid I to myſelf. "Where can I be ſecure from diſcovery? No one will eſteem me; nor compaſſionate my misfortunes. I have trodden virtue under my feet: I have ſought the company of thoſe who laugh at her dictates, ſport with her decrees, and drown her reproaches. What will become, O heaven! of my indulgent father? of my ſiſter?' Can they "ſurvive

"survive this tragical catastrophe! And "will not my voluntary banishment, and "their ignorance of the place of my re-"fuge, agonise them more than the sad "occasion of it!" Often did I essay to write to my father; and as often dropped the pen from my trembling hand.

"My soul was not the resemblance "of despair, but despair itself; and I che-"rished every horrible idea, that could add "to it a pang. I resolved to leave the town "that evening, and to change my name. "I wandered, for several months, from place "to place, absorbed in melancholy; till, "at length, having exhausted my cash, and "not knowing how to procure more, with-"out renewing my hated intimacy with "Valcourt, I enlisted—shameful to say!—"into the regiment of Captain Duperon-"ville; where I remained fourteen months. "I firmly resolved to conceal my true name "and family connexions from every one; "and I was equally careful to hide my "disgraceful occupation from those who

'knew me in a higher ſphere. But how 'great was my aſtonishment, at ſeeing Val-'court, one morning, as we were about to 'march from R... to D.....! I could 'not avoid his obſervation; he privately 'made a ſign to ſpeak with me apart; when 'he upbraided me for concealing my wants 'and my reſidence from him: he accuſed 'me of meanneſs, in reſorting to ſo deſpi-'cable an expedient; and offered me his 'purſe. But I withſtood all his entrea-'ties; and he left me, filled with indigna-'tion.

'In the evening, I was informed by 'Lieutenant Adelclar, of the happy change 'which had taken place in my affairs.— 'Ah! how shall I inſtruct my heart to be 'adequately grateful to you, my dear fa-'ther, who have ſo inceſſantly laboured to 'obtain my redemption! Can you forgive 'a ſon who has thus diſgraced himſelf? '——Confuſion covers my face!'

He fell at the feet of the good Bed-

ford,

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ford, shedding a flood of tears; and, as they seemed to be the true effusions of penitence, all who were present bore him company. His worthy father, in particular, was sensibly affected; and a momentary silence ensued. At length, the good man exclaimed, 'My child! I forgive you!---- 'I am your father!' On saying this, he pressed him to his breast.

Ah! my friend! may nothing interrupt the brightening prospect! May Henry have sufficient courage to say Farewel! to his gay, but dissolute companions!

May 14, 179.

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LETTER XII.

JULIA TO CLEMENTINA.

WHAT gladness filled my heart, dear Clementina, as I read your letter! Oh! that I had been an eye-witness of your brother's return! That, alone, was wanting to render my happiness entire.

I instantly communicated this joyful event to my parents; who wept as I proceeded. We pictured to ourselves the transports, the congratulations, the tears, which this happy occasion demanded. My little sister Charlotte was nearly out of her wits: she repeatedly asked, If now you would ever more be unhappy? adding, that she could never help crying, when she saw you so affected about your brother. 'Let us also make merry to-day, mamma!'

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mamma!" said she. Obtaining a smile of approbation, she kissed the hands of her parents, saying, That, first, she should zealously strive to learn her lesson. We experienced a singular pleasure, on observing the studious diligence of this sweet infant, to master her task; and her innocent prattle, afterwards, added to our mirth.

Oh! my dear friend! you shall now forget your sorrows. Your brother has intrinsic merit: from henceforth the sage counsels of his venerable father will sink deep in his heart. He will imitate you; he will love virtue. Edward, also, will furnish him an example worthy of following. But strive to keep him from the infectious company of Valcourt, to whose account may be placed every past calamity. Estrange him from his false friends, and you seal his reformation.

Should the fond expectations which are now formed of Henry, be realised---- and that they will, I entertain no doubt----

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what felicity will your father taste during the remainder of his life! with what tranquillity will your hours glide away, your brother virtuous and your parent happy!

Receive the warm congratulations of our whole family; but, above all, the little Charlotte desires to occupy a place in your thoughts. I need not, I trust, tell you what a decided part I take in your good fortune.

May 16, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER XIII.

CLEMENTINA TO JULIA.

I Blush, my friend, ere I make my confession, lest you should afterwards deem me unworthy your esteem.

I had flattered myself that nothing but friendship resided in my bosom: but, alas! what a delusion of the senses! You will accuse me of unpardonable weakness: my affections are now divided! That heart, which was wholly consecrated to parental love, and to you, has admitted an intruder; and that intruder is the generous Edward! His virtue, his exalted understanding, his rank, his form; all conspire to create in me esteem and veneration. Can you believe, Julia, that when he first threw himself at

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my feet, when he first disclosed his passion; I had not the address to keep him in suspence. My tongue, indeed, was silent--- I could not speak---but, taking his hand, I assisted him to rise. My countenance, my perturbation, indicated but too plainly that he had nothing to dread.

Is it possible, my friend, to remain cold to the protestations of one, who can so nobly think, and so nobly act, as Edward? You do not know him, Julia! If you saw him---for one moment only---you would love him too. His virtues demand my reverence. O, Julia, I am not deceived: his irresistible good-humour, his manners, his polite qualifications, his understanding, every thing he does, or says, demonstrate the signs of a man of true worth and honour.

I never stood in greater need of your friendly counsel, than at this moment. You, who cannot be misled by partiality, nor blinded by the tender passion, will better

know

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know how to censure or approve. Write, therefore, without delay, to your affectionate Clementina.

Could I purchase the consent of your heart!—Can you forgive your friend? But judge me with rigour, and fashion your opinion agreeably to my deserts.

LETTER

LETTER XIV.

EDWARD TO DORVAL.

JOY and ſorrow both combine to delight and to diſtract me! Ah! Dorval, I muſt ſhortly ſeparate from her in whom is centered all my happineſs!—Clementina, the adorable Clementina, has accepted of my vows; and, alas! my father talks of quitting England.

Your fortunate Edward muſt, in a few days, bid adieu to the gaiety of the preſent moment. The ſeparation which I dread, will be at leaſt for eight or nine months.

My dear father has not only aſſented to my union with Clementina; but has, unknown to me, ſpoken to the worthy Mr. Bedford

Bedford on the subject. 'My friend,' said he, 'it is from our tenderest years that we 'have known and have esteemed each other. 'I have a son, in whose virtues are placed 'all my hopes. Your daughter possesses 'every charm that can dignify the sex. 'It is my most ardent wish to see them 'happy. Yes, my friend, I have already 'perceived that they love each other. My 'Edward I will place in a condition that 'shall enable him to support Clementina 'in that rank to which she is entitled. You 'have often told me, that your possessions 'are considerably diminished; and I but 'too well know the sad occasion of it. You 'are not ignorant of the extent of my for-'tune: and one half of it shall be the mar-'riage portion of Edward. Finally, I long 'for no greater earthly satisfaction, than to 'pass the remnant of my days with you, 'in this enchanting solitude. If you coin-'cide in my most earnest hopes, our chil-'dren shall be given to each other, on my 'return.'

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At these words, Mr. Bedford dropped tears of complacency. 'My friend!' said he to my father, 'you are all generosity. 'You delicately place your own happiness 'on my acceptance of an offer, which 'lays me under the greatest obligations. 'Can I refuse you? No! I acquiesce with 'transport. But I should have considered 'myself unpardonably censurable, if I had 'presumed to make the first advances; at 'a time when, alas! I am unable to give 'my Clementina what, a few years since, 'I had destined as her fortune. Edward 'might have formed a more advantageous 'contract; and it was not my duty, while 'such a possibility existed, to impede the 'current of his interest and his happiness.'

'Let us not lose a moment!' cried my father: 'let us inform our children, 'that their honourable love shall not be 'repressed by those mean considerations, 'which divide so many faithful hearts, 'and produce such lamentable consequen-'ces.'

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'hopes?' cried I, at length, alternately kiſſing the hands of theſe ineſtimable parents. 'O, yes!' anſwered they; Mr. Bedford, at the ſame time, preſenting me with the hand of Clementina. 'I am not in a condition, 'my children,' ſaid he, 'to make you rich; 'but, O, Edward! may I live to ſee you 'happy! That shall be my earneſt hope, 'and my fervent petition.'

We both kneeled before them, in a tranſport of gratitude. But my father aſſiſted us to riſe, the tears trickling down his cheeks. 'Live for each other!' ſaid he. 'When I return, the holy rites shall be 'performed. But, from this moment, I 'bequeath you half my fortune!'—Neither Clementina, nor myſelf, could form expreſſions, calculated to convey our acknowledgments of this unbounded generoſity; of this ſingular inſtance of parental affection. But we demonſtrated every other token of that thankfulne.s which filled our hearts.

At

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At this period, Mrs. Murville entered the room; and I ran to communicate to her all that had paſſed. In fine, Dorval, this has been the moſt auſpicious day of my whole life! Henry, alſo, took part in the general joy, and warmly felicitated us on our propoſed alliance. In the evening, ſome of the neighbouring gentry made us a viſit; when Clementina, as uſual, far out-shone the other ladies: she played ſeveral ſweet airs on the harpſichord, which she accompanied with her divinely-muſical voice; and not a few were the marks of approbation which followed.

Thus ended this memorable day! —Nothing but your abſence, Dorval, rendered it imperfect.

May 22, 179.

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LETTER XV.

HENRY BEDFORD, TO VALCOURT.

I Now take up the pen to return you my thanks for the ſolicitude which you manifeſted for my ſafety, on a late melancholy event. While I exiſt, I shall ever be ready to acknowledge your kindneſs on that occaſion. But pardon me for declaring, that it is my wish and my intention, never to ſee you more. I have reſolved to abandon thoſe pleaſures in which we too much, and too fatally, delighted; and which I now from my ſoul deteſt. I have reſolved to ſeclude myſelf from the gay world; for the comforts of ſolitude are eminently ſuperior to all other. I am in a circle of true friends. I am with thoſe who are capable of diſcerning genuine honour from the counterfeit. I am with thoſe who love virtue, even to enthuſiaſm.

Had

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Had my actions been always influenced by examples ſuch as theſe, never had my father, never had my ſiſter, ſuffered ſo much on my account: never had I owed obligations to any one.

Heaven grant, Sir, that you may henceforward think as I do! This is my ardent wiſh. — I thankfully return you the gold which you lent me at .....; and be aſſured of my prayers for your welfare.

May 24, 179.

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LETTER XVI.

VALCOURT, TO HENRY BEDFORD.

YOUR foolish epiſtle, Bedford, had a wonderful effect on my riſible muſcles! But is it friendly to write thus to me? You bluntly return me a paltry ſum, which I never conſidered as a debt, without ſaying what has befallen you, ſince the time that we parted. You alſo withheld your correſpondence. All this, indeed, I had never expected from Bedford! What induces you to cut off an intercourſe, productive of ſuch refined delights? But poſſibly you place ſome of your caſual indiſcretions to my account; and, by avoiding me, you doubtleſs hope to eſcape all future accidents! This is the effect of good advice; this is the advantage of ſitting at the elbow of an experienced father,

and

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and a demure ſiſter. But, with reſpect to the former, do you not know, that when the winter of life arrives, all the emanations of ſunshine are congealed.

You reſign yourſelf to the inſipidity of ſolitude! to what, I confeſs, would prove my bane. Theſe ſolemn, monaſtic arrangements, are indeed truly ridiculous!

I will own, however, that the country is not without its attractions, for a few hours, or perhaps for a few days, under certain reſtrictions. But do you always taſte that ſweet variety which a city affords? where you can change your friend or your miſtreſs, when diſguſted with the one, or ſatiated with the other.

The fair Charlotte has not unaptly dubbed you The CLOWN! I have read her your paſtoral production; at which she indulged a hearty laugh, and honoured you with the before-mentioned very dignified appellation.

Truly,

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Truly, Bedford, your military character became you better than your ruſtic one: and you have yet friends who will help you to a poſt in the former.

I shall expect to hear from you once more at leaſt; till when I shall continue your name in the liſt of my friends; till when I shall not conſider you muſty enough to perſevere in your ſtupid reſolution of shunning the pleaſures of the generous deities. Believe me your ſincere friend.

May 25, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER XVII.

JULIA TO CLEMENTINA.

NO, my Clementina, I blame the eſteem only, not the love, which you bear to Edward. If thoſe perfections which you have remarked in him, are ſolidly founded, he is indeed formed to render you happy. Your dear father will alſo find in him a worthy ſon, who will add to his felicity; who will comfort him in his declining years. Beyond every doubt, he will aſſent to your nuptials.

Your brother will be emulous in imitating the virtues of Edward: experience muſt convince him, that no other line of conduct will ſecure eſteem, or guard againſt adverſity. I have lamented his frightful ſallies of intemperance, and its conſequences

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ſequences to you and your father, much more than I have outwardly expreſſed. Now, at length, are your inquietudes removed. How truly do I share with you this happy change! But once more, my dear Clementina, let me counſel you to render the character of Valcourt deteſtable in the eyes of Henry. It may tend to diſſolve their connexion, if it be not already effaced. I tremble at the bare poſſibility of a renewal of the odious contract! It would precipitate your brother into the gulph of perdition: then would he be irretrieveably undone. That monſter's affected good qualities, his ſpecious generoſity, his crafty wit, his conſummate diſſimulation, are nearly competent to lead even Virtue herſelf aſtray. Alas! your Henry is not the only ſacrifice to his villainy.—Recommend all this to his ſerious attention; conjure him to be watchful in whatever relates to Valcourt. But forgive me, my dear friend: I am directing you, on a ſubject, in which your own underſtanding is infinitely ſuperior to mine. My pen was guided, however, by the beſt

of

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of motives.----I pray you to assure the happy Edward of my friendship and esteem; although I have not yet the honour of knowing him. Embrace Mrs. Murville, and your dear father, for me; and believe that I am unalterably your tender friend.

May 25, 179.

IN CONTINUATION.

SOME-ONE opens the door of my apartment!—What do I see? A letter from my dear Clementina! I unfold it with haste! ——Heavens! what joy for my friend, and for me! Your father, then, consents to reward you with Edward! Did not I foretel this, you timorous girl?——Your letter is nearly effaced by my tears: but they are the tears of gladness, extended beyond its usual limits.

You ask my company for a few days, at your house? Can I refuse your request, when

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when it is my wish to be always with you! —My parents will, very shortly, retire to their country residence; and, in the mean time, I have begged my mother's permission to see and to embrace you. She has freely consented; and therefore you may expect me.

May 25, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER XVIII.

VALCOURT, TO HENRY BEDFORD.

THIS is the laſt letter, Bedford, that I shall write you. But can you ſo calmly forget a friend whoſe life was always at your command in the hour of danger? Reward you thus my ſervices?

I will permit you to follow the dictates of your *own* heart — whether you accept a renewal of my friendship, or blot me from your memory for ever — But firſt vouchſafe me one ſmall favour, one feint ſpark of that regard which you uſed to profeſs for me. It is, that you will ſee me once more at my houſe; and accept a place at my table, in the company of a few ſelect friends; that we may, if it muſt be ſo, take a perſonal, laſt, farewel. This trifle, ſurely, you cannot refuſe me. I wait your anſwer.

May 26, 179.

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LETTER XIX.

HENRY BEDFORD, TO VALCOURT.

NAY, Sir, do not think that my heart is tinctured with ingratitude. You have, upon all occasions, found me sincere; and I am not less so now. But once more I must acknowledge, that the calamity, the self-reproach, that I have endured, has instructed me to become a new man; lest utter ruin should succeed the past.

It is true, I have been admonished to abandon you, by those whom ridicule cannot affect; and not only you, but also those despicable companions by whom you are encircled. And if you place any value on my friendship, let me entreat you also to quit their contaminating society. Drive them,

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them, with indignation, from your ſight: they merit, only, our abhorrence. If you ſo reſolve, then shall I not heſitate to own you for my friend.

I accept your invitation with pleaſure; and will attend you, once more, at your houſe. But think on the terms which are to unite us in the bonds of future friendſhip.

May 27, 179.

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LETTER XX.

VALCOURT, TO HENRY BEDFORD.

DEPART! Lose no time, I conjure you, Bedford! I impatiently expect your arrival. Come, with all possible dispatch.

May 28, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER XXI.

EDWARD TO DORVAL.

ALL now is involved in profound silence; all objects appear dead to my view. It is already two in the morning. I have been to-bed; but my troubled imagination compelled me to forsake the downy pillow; and it is at this moment, that my dejected soul seeks for consolation in the bosom of Friendship.

Ah! Dorval, we shall depart from hence in two days! Clementina is indisposed; and I fear that our projected journey is the sad occasion of it. God grant therefore, that her illness may not increase! —Alas! I could not exist without this adorable girl. — I call to memory a thousand occurrences, that add to my torment. I

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tremble at a ſeparation, that, perhaps, neither of us are fortified to encounter. Do not wonder, Dorval, when I tell you that my intellects are deranged !------Heaven ! charming Clementina, muſt I then leave you—probably for ever ! Never ſee you more, whoſe ſmile is Paradiſe. But my heart, that is occupied in loving you, and that meets your fond return, will never diminish in ardour, till its motion ceaſes.

Ah ! my friend, I have foreboding, prophetic ideas, that diſtract me------an undefinable ſomething, that produces a painful effect without a viſible cauſe. I tremble for evils; and yet am unable to divine from whence they will ariſe.

Poſſibly this is the laſt time that I shall write to you from this agreeable manſion. We shall travel expeditiouſly; and when I reach London, you shall hear again from him who will never ceaſe to eſteem you.

May 29, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER XXII.

CLEMENTINA TO JULIA.

AH! my Julia, what a day of anxiety is now about to close! The hour at last arrived, that destined the noble-minded Edward to quit this abode. He is gone! And I did not pronounce the last Farewel! It would have cost me too much. —My pillow affording me no comfort, and being, withal, indisposed, I arose this morning before day-break; when, early as it was, I perceived that the servants of our worthy guests were already in motion. Presently I observed my father and the Elder Mr. ****, walking in the garden, in very earnest discourse. I delayed not a moment, but ran to join them; when, heavens! how great was my surprise, at finding that the young Edward was gone, accompa-

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accompanied only by his valet! His father approached me, holding in his hand a letter, and a miniature-portrait of my Edward. 'My ſon,' ſaid he, 'has ſet off a few 'hours before me; and it was at my in-'ſtance. I feared that a ſeparation, any other 'way, might have given you both unne-'ceſſary anguish. This letter, and this 'portrait, I have the ſatisfaction to deliver 'you.' So ſaying, he tenderly embraced me.

Alas! my Julia! I could not conceal the emotion which invaded my boſom at this unexpected intelligence. I returned the ardour of the good old man. I preſſed him to my breaſt in unutterable agony.

Breakfaſt being ready, they led me---for I ſcarcely knew how to walk---into the ſaloon. Every object that now met my diſordered fancy, ſeemed to aſſume another form. Every thing was loſt; I was loſt to myſelf. At length, from my inundated heart iſſued a current to my eyes; and a few drops

preſently

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prefently terminated in a flood of tears. Mrs. Murville, both our fathers, every one, caught the ſympathetic infection; while I, a thouſand times, kiſſed the invaluable gem which I had juſt received.

Shortly, the moment approached, that was to ſever us from our remaining friend. I preſented him with my portrait, requeſting that he would give it to Edward. I had reſerved that pleaſure for myſelf; but his affectionate precaution wholly fruſtrated my purpoſe. The good man took a tender leave of us; and then departed, to our general regret.

Left thus to ourſelves, a gloomy ſilence enſued; every-one mourned the abſence of theſe worthy men.

But, my dear Julia, this is not the only affliction that hangs heavy on my mind. Your Clementina has weightier anguish in her boſom. My brother, yeſterday, ſet out for the reſidence of Valcourt! That

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That monſter has again enſnared him.---- Henry, O heaven! has renewed the hated intimacy; from which will reſult the moſt terrific conſequences.

Oh! can my dear father, can I, ever more taſte terrene happineſs!— Lament with, comfort, your Clementina! Her ſoul is pierced: and what shall adminiſter to the wound? Come to me, on the wings of love.

June 4, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER XXIII.

HENRY BEDFORD, TO VALCOURT.

I Must again thank you, my friend, for the agreeable converse which you have furnished me. I confess, that Emilia is a charming, yes, a divine girl; and, in good truth, she has captivated my heart. A year or two hence, and her budding beauties will attain perfection.

How gracious, how pleasing, is her manner! with what vividness does she discourse! What delectation will crown my hopes, should I be fortunate enough to excite her partiality! I am distractedly impatient. Yet three days must I wait, ere I can see her again! I will---yes, I will then---impart to her my love. But think not, Valcourt, that I harbour any designs on that

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that young lady, which are repugnant to honour. No! my misfortunes have taught me wisdom: they have convinced me, that true pleasure is unconnected with licentiousness. I have acted unworthily; I have pursued measures, which were derogatory to justice. Do not hesitate, Valcourt, to copy my example: nor forget the promise you have made me. Let our friendship continue on the basis which renews it. Henceforth, let honourable pursuits succeed to those of a contrary description.

You have long known the Baron ****; you are connected with him by the ties of blood. Should he narrowly enquire into our general character, and, as I forebode, change his conduct towards us; particularly for the sake of his lovely daughter; still must I approve his parental circumspection. Let us, therefore, at once become new beings; and when we have thus secured the Baron's esteem, suspicion nor distrust will arise in his bosom. We shall be

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be universally countenanced by men of honour and rank; and the future will obliterate the past Shew, for once, Valcourt, that you can govern your passions; restrain, keep them in subjection. If rectitude be the object, true felicity will be the end.

But pardon me: you will say, doubtless, that I am assuming an office which by no means suits my character. However, unlike some of more gravity, I do not offer you precept without example. And, if I am more earnest than becomes me, impute it to my eagerness for your welfare.

June 3, 179-

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LETTER XXIV.

VALCOURT, TO CHARLOTTE.

WELL, *now*, my alluring Charlotte, did I not tell you that I would attach Bedford again to my interest? Thus am I always successful. He was absolutely necessary to our schemes. His great propensity to play, will keep him with us; and a certain *dexterity* which he has acquired, is sometimes highly beneficial to our purses. Fear not, my bewitching Charlotte! In a few days, he shall pay you homage.

Farewel, my sweet friend! This evening I shall enjoy the happiness of making my court to you.

June 4, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER XXV.

VALCOURT, TO HENRY BEDFORD.

I Muſt confeſs, my friend, that your letter has ſenſibly affected me. I am now inſpired with new ſentiments. It is but lately that I have learnt to deſpiſe, yea, that I have ſeen the folly of, our former purſuits, and the turpitude of our gay aſſociates: and I am convinced that we shall obtain a greater portion of rational recreation without them.

I perfectly coincide with the advice which you have offered: in future, we will ſeek, only, the company of worthy and honourable men.

The hoſpitality and converſation of the Baron, and his amiable family, will

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afford us an abundance of harmlèſs amuſement.

I warmly felicitate you on the choice you have made. Emilia is indeed a captivating girl. Strive to win her affections. Her fortune is conſiderable; with her you will be affluent and happy.

To-morrow evening her father gives a ball. I shall expect to meet you there: till then, adieu!

June 4, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER XXVI.

JULIA, TO HER MOTHER.

FORGIVE me, dear mamma, for not ſooner acquainting you with my ſafe arrival here. How am I afflicted, on the one ſide, at being ſeparated from you, though but for a few days; from you, whom I delight to ſee, to converſe with, and to reverence! On the other, what a pleaſure is it to be with, and to attend, my Clementina! She is at preſent unwell; and her phyſician has conſtrained her to take as much repoſe as poſſible. Her father is low in ſpirit, on her account; but I truſt that her illneſs will be of ſhort duration.

Henry has deviated from the good reſolutions which he had formed. He was

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yesterday, in the company of Valcourt, at a ball given by the Baron ****, in commemoration of the birth-day of his daughter Emilia. Should he have the good fortune to preserve his intimacy with this truly respectable family, all will go well. Valcourt, however, has contrived to win him over; and him it was who introduced him to the Baron, to whom he is distantly related. I tremble, nevertheless, at this irresolute conduct of Henry: for Valcourt is a dangerous man. My most ardent wishes are, that the fears excited on this occasion, may prove illusory.

I hope that my dear parents are as agreeably situated, as I am. Receive the strongest assurances of friendship and high esteem from every-one here; but, above all, accept the love of your Julia; whose happiness will be increased when she hears from you.

June 6, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER XXVII.

HENRY BEDFORD, TO VALCOURT.

ALL is ended! all is loſt! ——unleſs you aſſiſt me.

Cruel, unrelenting deſtiny! will you always impede my meaſures, croſs my undertakings, and extinguish my hopes? Am I eternally to be your ſport?

I had imparted my love to Emilia; and she ſeemed not wholly to reject my ſuit. This encouraged me to ſend her a letter: and this curſed letter it is, that has plunged me into the profound abyſs of deſpair! But my ſenſes are confuſed. See, read yourſelf, what I this morning received from the Baron. Mark the waywardneſs of Fortune! If she, one moment, favours me, it is, the next, to deſtroy my hopes.

'SIR,

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'SIR,

'I See, with the utmost astonishment, through medium of the letter which you have written to my daughter, that you aspire to the honour of her hand! But do you, can you, flatter yourself that I shall suffer it? Your letter was delivered to me, and not to her for whom it was intended. Pardon me, for admitting you into my family before I was conscious of your character. It is, however, some comfort to me. And I now forbid an intimacy that can produce nothing but uneasiness.

'****'

Valcourt, can my proud spirit brook such an injury as this, without resorting to the most pointed vengeance? Did I harbour any thoughts, which were derogatory to the honour of Emilia, or the peace of her

her family? I feel a paſſion for her, which words cannot make known; and which increaſes, in ſpite of every obſtacle. She muſt, she shall, be mine, or I will ceaſe to breathe. The tendereſt conduct to Emilia, the moſt exemplary demeanour, shall shew her father the abſurdity of imbibing the haſty cenſures of the world.

It is now, it is now, that you muſt aſſiſt me with all the zeal of friendship. I am diſtracted! I approach to deſperation!

I doubt not, for a moment, but that, ere now, you have been honoured, by the Baron, with a letter to the like gracious purport.—Expect me early to-morrow.

June 6, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER XXVIII.

VALCOURT, TO HENRY BEDFORD.

FOLLOW the advice which I have given you, Bedford. Carry Emilia off by force! But, instead of adopting the stale mode of flying, post-haste, from those who will doubtless pursue, and probably overtake you, provide a disguise for yourself, and Emilia: leave your chaise a few miles before it reaches the first stage, and walk the bye-road to the little village of C..., where, with the good Widow Maurice, who is in my interest, you will find a safe retreat for a few weeks. It will afford you an opportunity of convincing Emilia of your honourable intentions; and when her family have given over their researches, you can then take your measures without fear, and act according to existing

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iſting circumſtances. If the Baron is not to be ſoftened, of which I shall take care to inform you, no obſtacle will then impede your flight.

I have already hit on a ſtratagem. You know La Bruaire, my old French valet. He is now in the ſervice of the Baron; and is villain enough to undertake any thing, when properly employed. Leave all to my management. I shall acquaint you with the reſult, at the proper ſeaſon.

June 8, 179.

LETTER

LETTER XXIX.

JULIA TO CLEMENTINA.

IT was not without experiencing the heavieſt anguiſh, that I left you, my dear friend, before you had perfectly recovered your health. May it ſo happen, that we meet again, never more to be ſeparated! How pleaſantly would the hours revolve!

It is my fervent hope, that, ere this, you have had leſs reaſon to be apprehenſive on your brother's account. Like you, I own that I feel the moſt lively apprehenſions, in conſequence of his renewed intimacy with Valcourt. Yet, poſſibly, has he ſeen enough of the miſchiefs that reſult from a diſſolute life, to warn him againſt new exceſſes. While they frequent the Baron's houſe, I ſee no ſerious

cauſe

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cause for alarm. Valcourt is related to the Baron; and will, I should imagine, fashion his behaviour to his company. Had he oftener visited at that house, it is likely that he would have found less reason to detest himself.

Let your brother follow the suggestions of his own heart: your supplications, your tears, believe me, will nothing avail. God grant that my wishes may be realised: That Henry may preserve his acquaintance with this noble family; without forgetting to shun the seducing snares of the faithless Valcourt!

Once more, my dear friend, let me entreat you to be tranquillised: at least, do not lose that fortitude, which you always possessed in the hour of adversity. This is the request of your Julia; and you must not disobey her. Tell your dear father, that I continue to honour him, as much as ever.

June 13, 179.

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LETTER XXX.

EDWARD, TO CLEMENTINA.

IN what a varied, in what a hateful noiſe, am I now ſituated!——Alas! my Clementina, how terrific is the ſpace that is now between us! By what a diſtance am I ſeparated from you!——We reached London two days ago: but, to me, this great city is already inſipid. How tranſcendently ſuperior are the pleaſures of your rural manſion, and its appendages!

Laſt night, I accompanied my father to the Haymarket Theatre; and we were agreeably amuſed. But there was ſtill ſomething wanting: without the preſence of Clementina, the delights, even of the drama, were imperfect. Seclusion affords me the greateſt comfort: for there, every

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every ſurrounding object brings you nearer to my view: I fondly imagine, that you are preſent; but the phantom quickly vaniſhes, and I ſtand, as at firſt, my eyes never changing their poſition, till I am immerſed in the depth of meditation. Sorrow at length, overpowers my heart; and I give vent to it, even in the preſence of my father.—I fear that I am not ſufficiently fortified to withſtand this ſeparation: heavens! a ſeparation that is to continue eight or nine months, at leaſt. It is an age! an eternity!

How fortunate, how happy, will your Edward conſider himſelf, when he holds you for ever in his arms!—But why do I complain? Am I not already in poſſeſſion of your heart? Is not the invaluable portrait which I hold in my hand, a memento of your eſteem? With what confluxibility of tranſport did I receive it from my father! It is a treaſure, my dear Clementina, that will alleviate the diſtreſſes which abſence cannot fail to occaſion.

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Shall I confeſs, that when I departed from your houſe, nothing could exceed the bitterneſs of my grief. I went early away, to avoid the laſt painful Adieu! and then did I miſs your dear miniature. It would have mitigated my anguish, and have abſorbed my tears.

Was it poſſible to take a ſtudied, formal leave of her, whoſe worth, to me, is not within the reach of computation? No! certainly I had ſunk under the attempt.—Can the angelic Clementina forgive me?—Yes! she is all clemency; and will not forget that she alſo might have been affected.—For this reaſon, I already preſume on the probability of pardon. In this point of view it is but a venial offence.—I rode no farther than to the firſt village from your houſe, where I waited for my father, and from whence we purſued the melancholy way.

We both join, in requeſting you to aſſure your father of our deep ſenſe of his good-

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goodness; and, in particular, convey to him my earnest acknowledgments, for all his affectionate attentions.

Will you permit me to enquire, my dear Clementina, if your brother remains stedfast in those praise-worthy resolutions which he had formed? If he yet merits your love?——Receive the most sacred assurance of my reverence; and vouchsafe me your permission to write often to you. It will afford me the highest consolation that I can yet expect.

June 16, 179.

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LETTER XXXI.

VALCOURT, TO HENRY BEDFORD.

DEPART, the moment that you receive this. Now is the time to put your intentions into execution. I impatiently expect you.

June 17, 179.

P. S. Read the following letter from La Bruaire.

LA BRUAIRE, TO VALCOURT.

Inclofed in the preceding.

FORGIVE me, Sir, for not fending you before the *hint* which you defired. The fcheme I mentioned in my letter of yefter-

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yesterday, I dare not undertake. You do me the honour to leave all to my management. Well, then, you know the crafty La Bruaire; you know how he can caper at the chink of gold. But, Sir, you also know my master. I should have much to fear from him, if he suspected that I had the impudence to betray him. This thought has cost me some trouble. However, I am now very strong in his favour; and I am not a little pleased at it, because he will suspect me the less.

Now am I got above all difficulties. My master himself is good enough to assist in the plot. This morning he set off, in the company of his lady, for T.....n, and they will not return these eight days. Emilia, to our good luck, is left behind, in the care of her gouvernante, whom I can easily outwit. The old dame is at present tormented with a cold. Thus shall I have a fine opportunity of placing my young lady in the hands of Squire Bedford. I have already bought two of the servants to my side,

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side, who, of course, will make no defence. So that you may depend on the good success of the enterprise. I shall inform you when she takes the next airing; and shall not fail to give you all other necessary information.

June 16, 179.

LETTER

LETTER XXXII.

CLEMENTINA, TO EDWARD.

DO you then esteem me so unsusceptible, Edward—me, who live only for you—as not cheerfully to grant you unlimited permission to write to me. Ah! the tears that bedew this paper, sufficiently indicate the share which I take in whatever affects your happiness.

Pleasure has forsaken this solitary abode; with you, every-thing is vanished! The bending trees, the warbling songsters that perch on their tops, all seem to join me in bewailing your absence.

The good Mrs. Murville departed from hence yesterday. The indisposition which I felt before your departure, increased afterwards;

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wards; and I was confined to my room for a few days: during which time I was ſoothed and comforted by the compaſſionate Julia, who would not leave me, till my recovery was apparent. How am I indebted to this amiable girl!

When I retrace our pedeſtrial excurſions, and diſcover, in the ſoft earth, the footſteps imprinted there, as we together wandered, then ſwells my tender heart with ſorrow. When I communicated to you its ſmart, on every former occaſion, of what a painful burden was I eaſed!—You, alſo, reſorted to the like expedient; and confided to me your cares and your inquietudes. Then did we enjoy the moſt perfect ſatisfaction, that true friendſhip, and exalted love, could furniſh.

But, alas! Edward, I fear that cruel deſtiny will never ceaſe to purſue me with implacable rigour. You ask me if my brother continues to merit my regard? Oh, that I could ſay, He does! But, on the contrary,

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contrary, his loose conduct augurs the unhappiest consequences. For some days past, I have scarcely seen him: no, the wicked Valcourt has entrapped him in his snares. Can I otherwise than lament his ruin? He is my brother; and I must deplore his folly. My father will be constrained - however it may wound his feelings---to adopt some decisive mode of curbing his profligacy; before shame and disgrace close the scene. ---Ah! Edward, the pen fell from my hand, for a few moments---Henry will be disgraced in the eyes of every one, who has the smallest knowledge of his family, or his vices. Melancholy will mark my dear father for her own. Ah, heaven! how little deserves this son the love of such a father! the one all goodness; the other, all ingratitude. Often do I observe the tears rolling down his aged cheeks: and I see them with emotion!

Heaven! can it be possible, that my brother---who is able to distinguish virtue from its opposite---is not to be moved by the

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the prayers, nor the entreaties, of a grey-haired parent, to leave the ſociety of one profligate monſter! Let me for a moment ſuppoſe him united to Valcourt by the bonds of real honour: Ought the friend to be preferred—for ever preferred---to the father, who has preſerved his life; who has waſted his property, to ſhield him from the horrors of confinement? who----But let me ſtop! my blood runs cold while I contemplate; the proſpect ſickens; and my hopes expire.

I do not blame the kind precaution which you took on your departure. No, it was a ſignal mark of your affection.---Rely always on the ſincerity of your Clementina.

June 18, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER XXXIII.

EDWARD TO DORVAL.

WE are at laſt, Dorval, ſafely arrived in London: but I am already diſguſted with it. Indeed, had I never ſeen the adorable Miſs Bedford, this fine city might have afforded me a large portion of amuſement. But, alas! ſo very diſtantly removed, as I am, from her, whom I ſo highly value, and ardently admire, what is adequate to fill up the chaſm! I lament my ſeparation from her; and from you, who know ſo well how to ſoothe the anguiſh of a friend.

Henry Bedford has again reſorted to his former abandoned courſes. I therefore pray you to make every poſſible enquiry reſpecting him; and if you hear, or ſuſpect,

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that he is about to undertake any-thing, repugnant to reason or justice, and that would affect his worthy family, let me entreat you to give timely intimation thereof to his father, who will be thankful for your kind solicitude. Your last letter informed me, that you intend to stay at Bath yet several weeks; and this being the focus of Valcourt's iniquity, you will not find it difficult to obtain the desired information.

Yesterday I received a letter from my lovely Clementina. She apprised me of her brother's fatal relapse, and has the most lively apprehensions for the issue. I, also, cannot divest myself of dread on this occasion. It is continually before my eyes. But heaven grant that we may be agreeably deceived! I must break off; I can think no more on the subject. Write as often to your friend as possible.

June 25, 179.

LETTER

LETTER XXXIV.

CLEMENTINA, TO MRS. MURVILLE.

LOSE no time, Madam, if you would comfort my poor father.----- O heaven! he is no more himself----The pen falls from my hand.....

June 28, 179.

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LETTER XXXV.

BORVAL, TO MRS. MURVILLE.

IT is with concern, Madam, that I communicate an occurrence which will agonise my feelings, as I proceed. ——I take the liberty of writing to you, that the unhappy event may be gradually made known to the worthy Mr. Bedford; for, if told without great precaution, it might prove highly injurious to his health, in its present state.

Henry Bedford, I fear, will never leave his vicious pursuits, nor the inhuman Valcourt, till utter ruin overtake him. Yesterday I accidentally paid a visit to the Baron ****, who has a seat in the vicinity of this city. But how great was my surprise, at finding the whole family in

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in a general ſtate of ſadneſs and confuſion! The Baron was frantic, and ſwelling with rage towards the young Bedford. Taking a journey, lately, on ſome buſineſs reſpecting his eſtates, his daughter Emilia was unfortunately, and to her utter deſtruction, left behind—For, alas! Emilia, in the mean time, was forcibly carried off by Henry Bedford!

This, Madam, is the outline of that atrocious tranſaction to which I alluded. The Baron is related to that reptile Valcourt; and this worthy man, unconſcious of his flagitious purſuits, or, at leaſt, ignorant of their extent, at all times received him in a moſt affable manner. Valcourt it was who introduced Henry Bedford to the family. Henry, inconſiderately, addreſſed Emilia in the language of love, without the knowledge or approbation of her parents. An accident, however, developed this growing intimacy; and, in conſequence, the Baron very narrowly ſcrutiniſed into the characters of both theſe young

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men: but his enquiries proving wholly in their disfavour, he reproved and forbade them his house.

Henry, being thus repulsed, gave way to his natural impetuosity of temper, and resolved to employ force where artifice had failed. Valcourt, accustomed to glory in nefarious schemes, pretended that the Baron's behaviour towards him, likewise demanded revenge. This abandoned libertine never, perhaps, once reflected on the heinous guilt of betraying a relation, to whom he owed the greatest obligations. He fixed on a valet, who had formerly lived with him, but who was now in the service of the Baron, to conduct and bring his diabolical plan to perfection: he knew, but too well, that this villain was suited to the purpose.

Emilia was accustomed to take an airing, every afternoon, when the weather permitted, in the company of her gouvernante: but at this period it happened, that

she

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she was greatly indispoſed, and therefore could not attend her young lady. Twice Emilia went out, after the departure of her parents, and returned ſafe: but, alas! the third time completed her ruin!

The manly and handſome perſon of Henry Bedford, added to Emilia's youth and inexperience, had probably created in her tender heart a partiality in his favour: for I do not hear that she was much alarmed when he commanded her coachman to ſtop, or that she made any objection to go into the chaiſe which he had provided to carry her off. However, it muſt, on the other hand, be conſidered, that the ſervants were bribed, and that they would ſay any thing to skreen themſelves, and their employers.

It is not yet known, to what part of the world they are fled. Emilia's father is highly exaſperated; and will not reſt till he has punished the authors of this diſgraceful outrage. He has diſpatched meſ-

ſengers

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ſengers in all directions, with orders to take both Emilia and Bedford into cloſe cuſtody, if they diſcover them.

You, Madam, know the intimate connexion which ſubſiſts between my friend and Clementina: and ſorry am I to think that this tranſaction ſo nearly affects their happineſs. However, my endeavours shall not be wanting, should an opportunity offer, to moderate the Baron's exceſſive rage.

June 28, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER XXXVI.

CLEMENTINA, TO EDWARD.

READ the inclofed letter from your friend!—I am unable to write more on the fubject.——My father, O heaven! is not well. —— Ah! dear Edward, were you here--perhaps you might calm the tempeft, which is about to overwhelm me.

June 29, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER XXXVII.

EDWARD, TO CLEMENTINA.

MY fears, then, dear Clementina, are at length realised. Dorval has informed me of all: and grievously does it affect both me and my father. But I beseech you to be comforted; for your own sake, for mine, and for that of your dear father. It is a duty incumbent on you; it is a debt that you must pay to that venerable parent. He will think it sufficient to live for you. Deprived of your dutiful attentions, what would become of him? Who could measure his grief, if he lost you? Lost you!---Heavens! what a horrible suggestion! Certainly, it would precipitate his dissolution.-----What, too, would become of your faithful Edward! My God! I tremble at the ghastly prospect!

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ſpect! I cannot purſue the ingrateful idea; my eyes overflow from the bitter abundance of my heart.

I take the liberty of incloſing a letter from my father. Yet, this once, let me entreat you, my Clementina, to ſummon all your fortitude; and, in the midſt of that anxiety which you cannot wholly ſuppreſs, think ſometimes on the unhappy Edward.

July 4, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER XXXVIII.

EDWARD TO DORVAL.

AH! my friend, to what misery was I born! At this inauspicious moment I am encompassed by despair. My heart was not formed to encounter such chilling vicissitudes; to bear what is destined to try its strength. In vain I strive to resist the torrent; my senses wander, and I lose my fortitude.

O God! what has the unhappy Mr. Bedford to expect from his brutal son! I fear for the anger of the Baron ****; who will most assuredly revenge the wrongs of his Emilia, in a most signal manner. I foresee the most lamentable consequences. Your intercession will nothing avail. You are but too conscious of that nobleman's

severity

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ſeverity of virtue. In a few days I shall leave this place, and endeavour to ſolace my hapleſs Clementina and her ſuffering father.

God grant, if it be for the beſt, that the fugitives may not be diſcovered! But, alas! what, on the other hand, will be their fate? They have not the means of living in a foreign country.—Do not heſitate to inform me of all that you hear; for I expect the worſt. Beſides, a ſhort time will give publicity to whatever may occur. Farewel, my friend: I muſt conclude.

July 5, 179.

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LETTER XXXIX.

VALCOURT, TO HENRY BEDFORD.

FLY, with your Emilia, the moment you open this! Her enraged father has discovered the place of your retreat. You did not properly manage with the coachman.—In the name of heaven, fly!.....

July 8, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER XL.

MR. MURVILLE, TO THE ELDER EDWARD.

THE tragedy is closed! the actors are retired!—All is done!—Our family is dishonoured; it is surrounded by obloquy. Despair inhabits our minds.

Read the following letter, Sir; and bemoan our unparalleled sufferings.

Your friend, my brother, is in the most imminent danger. His physicians give us no more hope.

July 15, 179.

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DORVAL, TO MR. MURVILLE.

LOSE no time, Sir; but depart when you receive this: your presence is necessary here. Alas! I am so deeply affected, that it is with difficulty I guide my pen. Emilia, the unfortunate Emilia, lives no more! She is, by the hand of the young Bedford, destroyed!--- My blood runs cold in my veins, as I retrace this woeful disaster.

The Baron having discovered the retreat of these ill-fated lovers--for it was apparent that they had not quitted the kingdom---dispatched two of his servants, with two peace-officers, in a coach drawn by four of his best horses, with strict orders to take them into custody. Bedford, getting information of what had passed in Emilia's family, made his escape, with the young lady, about half an hour before the messengers reached the place of their concealment. The route which they had taken, being too obvious

obvious to admit of a doubt, the unhappy fugitives were instantly pursued, and, in a short time, overtaken. The officers stopped their chaise; on which the fiery young man sprung out, and, with the most bitter imprecations, declared he would shoot the first man through the head, who dared to approach the carriage. But the officers were not to be intimidated; and while they were proceeding to hand Emilia to her father's coach, the servants surrounded her lover. Bedford, grown desperate at the probability of being overpowered, by a wonderful effort, got loose from those who held him, and instantly discharged a pistol at the officers, who, by this time, had taken Emilia under their protection. The young lady fell senseless to the earth; and Bedford, observing that he had missed his object, shot one of his opponents through the head with a second pistol, as he ran to succour his Emilia.---Good God!..... my pen refuses to perform its office..... The contents of the first discharge had lodged in the bosom of this devoted young

lady, from whence the ſanguineous ſtream now frightfully iſſued! Bedford, terrified and thunder-ſtruck at this tragic ſcene, attempted to end his own life; but in vain. He directed his ſhrieks towards heaven; and a thouſand times invoked, that inſtant annihilation might deliver his agoniſed ſoul. The remaining officer, aſſiſted by the ſervants, made him a cloſe priſoner; while the two coachmen took up the ſlaughtered corſes, and gallopped to the next village: but the extinction of life was too apparent to hope any-thing from ſurgical aid.

No influence can ſave this miſerable youth from the ſhameful death which awaits him. He is committed to I.....r gaol, and heavily ironed: for the law pays no reſpect to offenders of this deſcription. The aſſizes will be held at T.....n in a few days; and all that we can expect to obtain, is the reſpite of his trial till the winter circuits. The Baron being confined with the gout, our endeavours are the more likely to ſucceed. It will give the young man

time

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time to repent, and afford us an opportunity of fortifying his disconsolate friends preparatory to the last dreadful catastrophe.

God sustain you all!

July 14, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER XLI.

THE ELDER EDWARD, TO MR. MURVILLE.

WHAT unheard of misfortunes have fallen to the lot of my friend; to me; and to you! We, who had, in the proposed union of our children, planned their happiness and our own! Horrible reverse of fortune! the serene prospect is vanished, and tempests and thunder occupy the space.

My son—O deadly sorrow!—will, I fear, but too soon expire in my arms. On hearing the sequel of Henry Bedford's last fatal adventure, his countenance assumed a pallid hue, he trembled, and fell motionless on the ground. When a little recovered, alas! his speech was wild and incoherent;

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herent; and I am painfully apprehensive for the result.——Are these the nuptials, that, I had so fondly hoped, were to have terminated my days in comfort? Is this the allotted satisfaction of a grey-haired parent?—But let me refrain.

I entreat you, Sir, to sustain the lovely Clementina; concealing from her the dangerous situation of my Edward. Console, also, her worthy father; and, if he yet lives, endeavour to animate him with new hopes, however delusively grounded. I shall be with him as soon as possible.

Receive every assurance of my esteem; and believe, that I feelingly participate in all that affects the happiness of your good family.

July 18, 179.

LETTER

LETTER XLII.

MR. MURVILLE, TO THE ELDER EDWARD.

LAMENT, pity us, Sir! Misery, and her train, are seated in every corner of our house. We are covered with shame and confusion.——The petitions, the entreaties of Dorval, to obtain a respite of Henry's trial, were fruitless. Justice has taken its tremendous course.—My brother, two days afterwards, unable to withstand this agonising shock, died in my arms. ——Clementina has displayed more than human fortitude; and given undeniable tokens of a magnanimous mind. Not one moment did she leave her dying father, but continued her unceasing attentions, till, alas! they were no longer necessary.

Unre-

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Unrelenting Death has robbed you of a friend, who was all goodness; and me of a brother, whom I fervently loved. And yet, alas! even now, I cannot see the end of my troubles. Mrs. Murville is taken ill; and her physicians have fearful doubts of her recovery.

May it please heaven, shortly to call me from a state, in which I now meet nothing but disappointment, and disgrace!

July 29, 179—.

LETTER

LETTER XLIII.

CLEMENTINA, TO EDWARD.

RECEIVE the last Farewel! of an unfortunate individual, who once strove to merit your esteem; but in whose heart, the unextinguished love that yet reigns there, is now become a crime. —My love for you a crime! Tormenting idea, that strikes the soul; while I feel it impossible, ever to banish you from my thoughts.

What agony!---I am astonished, at perceiving that I have outlived my sufferings! I imagined, after I had seen my dear father sigh his last, that I had endured the worst of human evils. But I deceived myself; there was yet something which called for another trial of my fortitude——To divide

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vide my heart from your's!.... You..... myself, to forget —— Forget! No, that is impossible! —— To LEAVE you! that is the appropriate word. That can, that must, that will I do. I am impelled to this painful resolution, by a sacred regard for your honour, and your future happiness. My reason, and the love that I bear you, prompts me to shield your good name from the hasty censures of the world. While we do not live alone for ourselves, me must pay some deference to the opinions of men. And do we owe no account to our offspring? Would you stain them with the scandal which will keep an even pace with the memory of your consort's brother?

Misery!.... Where am I? Must I behold the light, to endure such unparalleled sufferings?—Be not cruel, Edward: come not here to see me. I am concealed from the eyes of the whole world; and possibly I should be denied to you. It is essential to our future welfare, that we separate.... for ever!

Return my portrait; and eradicate every prepossession in my favour, from your heart. Be you not my greatest enemy, by persevering in a constancy, that would embitter my succeeding days; while it is utterly impossible that our mutual engagements can be fulfilled. Imagine that there never was a Clementina, who loved you. —Has malignant fate, then, been envious of my bearing the name of Edward's Wife!

Offer up your vows to another; to another who is worthy of your love; to another, who can imbosom your affection like Clementina. Fear no interruption on my side; it is not permitted me: and I think my courage great enough to protect me from such a weakness.—Farewel, my friend!—Let me this once give you that holy title; a title which was once so dear to me, and which..... But it is enough! I must abruptly end, or pursue the subject for ever.

July 30, 179-

LETTER

LETTER XLIV.

EDWARD, TO CLEMENTINA.

THE blood congealed in my veins, as I perused and re-perused your letter. You take of me an eternal farewel! —I leave, I forget you!—No! that is impossible!—You hide yourself from the observation of the whole world! you, who furnished that world with the brightest examples!—You call your love for me a crime!—You call love for me a crime! Heavens! what a terrifying thought!

Do you solicit me to be guilty of the vilest inconstancy—a deed which I could not survive—at the very moment too, when the vicissitudes of fortune demand the most signal proofs of my sincerity! It is, in emergencies like these, my Clementina,

that great minds muſt diſcover their ſuperiority. Good God, I tremble !---No, my only love, you cannot be unſuſceptible to the moſt ſuſceptible of mortals. You shall, yes, you will be merciful enough, to animate me anew; though my father, to-day, coincided with your romantic reſolutions, and wished me to adopt them. But I will ſtrive to refute all his reaſoning: I will throw myſelf at his feet, and melt his ſcruples with my tears. Should he, nevertheleſs, prove deaf to my ſupplications, I will fly to your arms, and nothing but death shall ever divide us. No, thou dear partner of my ſoul, though your brother..... O heavens! I am confounded at the dreadful recollection. Forgive me the mention of his name..... Nothing, nothing, shall bar up the avenues to our love.

I offer up my heart to another---O heaven! to another!---I! while it is eternally bound to you! --No! much rather would I tear it from my boſom.

I cannot

I cannot fail to be happy with my Clementina: a wilderness, a hut, with her, I would prefer to a palace with another.--- Yet, if my father should persevere in his cruelty----Cruelty! no, it is a stranger to his nature: his great soul will not permit him to see us miserable---But the opinions of the world!---yet, what has an exalted mind to do with those? It must, alone, follow the dictates of virtue, humanity, and nature-----Should my father remain inflexible, and thus add weight to every other affliction, let me share with you, in that concealment which you have planned, the fragments of our allotted felicity. A small piece of land will supply our wants; and the cultivation of it, will be conducive to health: and health, and retirement, will lead to happiness.

You ask, if our offspring will not be entitled to some account of the motives which impelled us to bring them into a family loaded with disgrace? No, my Clementina, we are only restricted to set them

the moſt virtuous examples: nor can they upbraid us with more than our own miſdeeds: and, on that ſcore, moſt aſſuredly they will never have cauſe of complaint.

Banish an opinion, which is inconſiſtent with the ſeverity of your own virtue. Never did I take a more feeling share in all that concerns you, than in the preſent inſtance: never, Clementina, did I love you more devoutly than at this moment. Your invaluable miniature receives my careſſes and my ſighs: that dear pledge of your affection, or its shadow at leaſt, shall remain with me, even after death! that gem, which you have the cruelty to recal.

I shall not depart from hence in leſs than eight days; hoping, ere then, to obtain my father's renewed conſent to our union. Yes, I shall depict to him my own hapleſs condition; and entreat him to judge of my ſorrows by his own. He mourns his departed friend, and commiſerates the mis-

fortunes

fortunes of Clementina. He will consent. But, whatever may be the result, then shall I hasten to throw myself into your arms for ever.

If I weep no more, at the severity of our lot, it is because the briny current is exhausted. Adorable Clementina! permit me to entitle myself your friend, your adorer, and, shortly, your—husband!

August 7, 179.

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LETTER XLV.

EDWARD, TO CLEMENTINA.

MY dear father has invigorated me with new life. This morning he gave his consent to our union. It now remains with you, my sweet friend, to render me the happiest of mortals.

To-morrow I fly towards you. Never more will we separate——while we live.

August 13, 179.

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LETTER XLVI.

EDWARD TO DORVAL.

I Am, at length, Dorval, recovered from a ſevere indiſpoſition. In a few hours I ſhall ſet off for the manſion of our deceaſed friend.

The corporeal and mental agony which I have endured, took from me the power of continuing our correſpondence. But my father will, to-day, acquaint you with every new occurrence.

Auguſt 14, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER XLVII.

CLEMENTINA, TO EDWARD.

NO!—Shame, honour, virtue—nay, even the love I bear you—forbids me ever to see you more. When this reaches you, I shall be gone from hence. But though I thus shun you, my heart will remain for ever your's. It is alone the late unhappy event, which demands our separation.

You may expect a letter from me, at some more tranquil season; at a season, when, with me, you will be fully conscious of the impossibility of our union. Farewel!

August 11, 179.

*** This Letter did not arrive till several hours after the departure of Edward; and was opened by his father.

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LETTER XLVIII.

CLEMENTINA, TO JULIA.

THIS is the last time, my beloved friend, that the pity-worthy Clementina shall ever write to her Julia. When you receive this, I shall be far, far from you.----Cruel destiny! how could I, for a moment, survive your inflictions!---- In vain do I direct my prayers to heaven, for permission to resign a life, which is spotted with disgrace. Shame follows my footsteps.---When I have forwarded this to you, I leave a place, which once indeed was truly dear to me. I tear myself from you; from my aunt and uncle Murville; yes, for ever!---Honour, virtue, commands me to sequester myself from the eyes of all those who love me.---Should heaven prolong my existence yet a little longer, you,

Julia,

Julia, and you alone, shall have knowledge of the lot of your Clementina. But my mind's debasement, my lively sense of the scandal which is attached to me, confirm my resolution of leaving this part of the country. The same motives induce me to refuse my hand to the unfortunate Edward, whom I from henceforth must endeavour to forget. Yet, shall I not survive the attempt. His portrait lies before me: I kiss it a thousand times; I deluge it with my tears.---Yes, dear image of my Edward, you, at least, I may possess! That, that, is permitted me! ----Ought I to contaminate him with the ignominy of my brother? Who will be so liberal, as not to relate the heart-rending narrative when they talk of me? or, should I happen to be esteemed happy, who will fail to wonder at my supposed insensibility? Would not Edward's relations detest me? and with reason? Or, should I meet his wishes, that, in a few short months, he might mourn the death of an affectionate consort? And then.--O piercing thought!---should a pledge remain of our union, would he

not,

not, when grown to maturity, perhaps upbraid his father with the odium of his birth? —O God! how my heart sinks at the reflection! No—it can not be. I must depart, to escape the dangers of solicitation. Forgive me, Julia, for not now disclosing to you the place of my purposed seclusion. I even fear for those enquiries which you will doubtless make; for a discovery would most assuredly poison the few remaining days or months that I have probably to remain on this perilous globe.

Endeavour you, also, to forget your Clementina. She is become an object of reproach to the whole world; and she goes afar off, where her person and her misfortunes shall be alike unknown. My future friendship, my correspondence, would dishonour you. But you may lament my sufferings and my fate: formerly I was worthy your esteem. If those who love me, regret my absence, try to console them: and if you ever see the noble-minded Edward, fail not to convince him of the pro-

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priety of my refusal to become a bride. This is the last favour which the miserable Clementina dares to require of her friend.

Embrace your affectionate parents on my behalf; and--for the last time---! receive the most unfeigned declaration of my sincere and ardent love for you; which nothing can efface. May it once more happen that I hear of your welfare!—Fate is envious of our friendship; it was too exalted, too sublime, to continue durable. But it is our duty to resign ourselves to the dispensations of the Almighty Disposer of events, and ..... Let me end!... My strength fails. My departure commands me...yet once ..... Julia ..... Farewel...

August 11, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER XLIX.

THE ELDER EDWARD, TO MR. MURVILLE.

I Beſeech you, Sir, to give the incloſed letter from Clementina, to my unhappy ſon, when you diſcover a favourable opportunity. Heaven! it fell out of my hand, as I was reading it. Tranquillize his troubled mind; and tell him that his tender father will haſten to him. My concerns here will only detain me a few days longer. I cannot write to him; my ſenſes are too confuſed.

Auguſt 15, 179.

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LETTER L.

MR. MURVILLE, TO THE ELDER EDWARD.

FLY to us, Sir! Your son lies ill of a dangerous fever.

Clementina—the unfortunate Clementina!—lives no more. My God! her evil destiny has even refused her bones a resting place in the earth! Can I a moment withstand the evils that croud so fast upon us! My hair stands erect, while I think on this most horrible disaster.

You, Sir, are no stranger to her flight, which, reckoning from this morning, happened just five days ago. This child of misfortune gave us to understand, that it was her intention to tarry for some time with her

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her friend Julia. Her singular resolution, during the late direful events, misled us. She took an affectionate leave of me, and Mrs. Murville; and---O deadly smart!---I myself handed her to the chaise. She departed then---O heaven!---she departed, for ever from our sight! Shortly after this, receiving a letter, addressed to her, from Julia, by one of her father's servants, who had not heard that Clementina was even expected there, I begun to grow suspicious. I called to mind the very singular manner of her embracing us; together with the suddenness of the journey: this occasioned me great uneasiness. But other considerations, again, restored me to peace. Thus was I alternately agitated and soothed, till the evening; when my apprehensions obtaining the prevalence, I repaired to the man who had furnished her with the vehicle. I reached his house, a few minutes after he returned; when he immediately handed me a letter, which Clementina had sent back. I opened it in haste; when, good heaven! how great was my surprise and anguish, at

seeing that she took an eternal farewel of me and her aunt. So great was my astonishment, that, for some minutes, I could neither speak, nor resolve on what line of conduct to pursue. At length, being somewhat recovered, I asked the Stable-keeper, To whence he had taken the young lady? His answer was, That he had left her at ....., where, she said, it was her intention to tarry for some time, commanding him to return, and be careful in giving me the letter. The horse not being yet taken from the whisky, I sprung into it with the swiftness of lightning, and ordered him to drive me quickly to the spot where he had left her. He obeyed me, with reluctance. She alighted, I found, before the man had reached the house, where he refreshed himself: so that, when we arrived at the village, I eagerly enquired after her of all whom I met; but to no purpose. At last, chance directed me to a small inn, where I was informed that a young lady answering her description, dressed in mourning, and having a trunk, which was conveyed by a

por-

poster, had put up there for a few hours, and from whence she had hired a conveyance to M.....: more of her they did not know.

I fed the vain hope of seeing her again; and immediately ordered a post-chaise, in order to continue the pursuit: while it was preparing, I instructed my attendant to give Mrs. Murville the necessary information, on his return, however late it might be. I travelled nearly the whole night, which appeared to me an age. By the break of day I found myself at M.....——O God! I must here drop the pen for a few moments, at the heart-rending recollection of the woeful fate of my dear Clementina.—Oh, that this period of her destiny could be blotted out of the calendar of time!—I wonder that I did not fall dead to the earth, when I heard in what manner we had lost this spotless innocent.....!

The first object which I saw, was the ruins of a great building, that, the preceding

ing night, had been consumed by fire: but, turning from this lamentable scene, I directed my enquiries after Clementina; and at the house where my chaise stopped, I was informed that the building which had been just destroyed, was a large inn; that a young woman, answering the description which I had given, dressed in black, with sorrow strongly marked on her countenance, and having a trunk, arrived there the preceding night; that this unfortunate lady, together with several other persons, perished in the flames, which were so rapid, that no assistance could be given them; and that a few who had escaped, were then in this house. These dismal tidings instantaneously changed the course of my blood; something oppressed my brain; I struggled to recover myself, but, in the attempt, I lost my recollection.—By the careful attentions of those who witnessed my situation, I at length recovered, to the most painful reflections: for no doubt remained; her untimely death was but too certain. Every circumstance concurred, to deprive me of

all

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all hope.—With despair, therefore, in my heart, I returned home. Alas! what a heavy task was it for me to comfort Mrs. Murville, whose health is yet in a precarious state. I carefully concealed from her the melancholy fate of her dear Clementina; but, by some unaccountable means, it was quickly buzzed in the neighbourhood.

The day after my return, I was informed that the unhappy Edward lay, deprived of his senses, at the house of the Stable-keeper who had conveyed Clementina away; and that they were about to bring him hither. This man very thoughtlessly answered all the enquiries of your son, respecting his beloved mistress, without softening any of the horrible circumstances. He related, with tears in his eyes, all that he knew, and all that he had heard. I instantly set off to this author's habitation, where I found the hapless Edward in a pitiable state. Five hours did he remain speechless; when, opening his languid eyes, he exclaimed, in a weak and interrupted voice, 'Clementina!

'mentina! adorable Clementina! do I see 'you then again?' Repeating these words more than fifty times, it was perfectly clear that his senses were disordered: however, the physicians do not wholly despair of his recovery.

Now, Sir, can you but too well imagine what is my situation! Our sweet Clementina is for ever lost to us; that Clementina, who was the joy of our lives; by a death more terrible than generally falls to the lot of mortals. Alas! she had no weeping friends around her bed; no one to cheer her departing soul! Her corse, which I should have watered with my tears, was rudely consumed to ashes, without an attendant sigh, or an accompanying groan, from any of those who loved her.

No funeral rites informed the passing stranger, that CLEMENTINA BEDFORD, the most virtuous, and most unfortunate, of her sex, had resigned her breath, in the height of beauty, and in the perfection of loveli-

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loveliness. I must once more drop a tear to her memory: and you, Sir..... But let me forbear, lest I impart to you those mighty sorrows, that will have vent.

The remainder of my life is clouded with trouble. Mrs. Murville must be told the horrid truth when she is better able to bear it: and how shall I invent expressions calculated to soothe the anguish of her mind!

August 28, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER LI.

THE ELDER EDWARD, TO DORVAL.

THE inclosed letter from Mr. Marville, requires no comment; it speaks but too plainly of itself. I am about to set off for the present residence of my unfortunate son —— whom I —— horrid thought! —— shall, perhaps, quickly see expire in my arms....., and ..... But let me not fear the worst; though, my strength and my spirits fail me. —— Cruel destiny..... Farewel, Sir..... and pity us.....

September 7, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER LII.

MR. MURVILLE, TO DORVAL.

YOU ask, Sir, after the lot of your friend—— Alas! every one here is involved in ſorrow. Edward, the lamented Edward! lies entirely deprived of his ſenſes; and the phyſicians now deſpair of his recovery. You can ſcarcely imagine how much his affectionate father feels for him: he will not, without reluctance, conſent to leave the bed-ſide of his ſon, even for a moment; inſomuch, that I am afraid his own health will be impaired. For the laſt five days he has taken no reſt.

Come to us ſpeedily, Sir, if you would ſee your friend before he expires. ----How faſt does one diſmal event follow another!

O I trem-

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I tremble for the moment when Mrs. Murville shall hear the ſad death of her Clementina; and it will not be poſſible always to conceal it from her..... Heaven! Is there a family in the univerſe, whoſe afflictions can equal our's? This paper will inform you how grievouſly I am affected.--- Once more, let me entreat you, Sir, to come to us: your preſence, perhaps, may occaſion ſome alteration in the malady of the unhappy Edward. Adieu!

September 20, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER LIII.

DORVAL, TO THE MARQUIS D....,
A RELATION OF THE ELDER
EDWARD.

WHEN I heard of the dangerous ſituation of my friend, I haſtened to him, at the manſion of the late, and deſervedly lamented Mr. Bedford. Never before could I have imagined, that a human being was capable of ſurviving thoſe complicated afflictions, both mental and corporeal, which have fallen to the ſhare of the haplefs Edward.

I have been indefatigable in my enquiries, reſpecting the certainty of Clementina's death; and am ſorry to ſay that thoſe pleaſing doubts which had been raiſed, have all vanished into certainty. Every new

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account of this shocking catastrophe, coincides with the first report.

My unfortunate friend has lain nearly these four weeks, deprived of his senses: his physicians have been unceasing in their attentions, and have exerted their utmost skill to restore him. This, aided by the strength of his constitution, has, at length, produced more favourable symptoms: and yesterday, having rested well the preceding night, we observed that an alteration was approaching. He has left his chamber already. The fever, or at least the violence of it, seems to have terminated in a hypochondriacal complaint. He is conscious of the cause of his illness, and often laments the destiny of his Clementina. His anguish, however, is now somewhat abated, from a consciousness that the dispensations of Providence are just and equitable, and that they are directed to the ultimate benefit of mankind. He is continually pressing the portrait of Clementina to his breast, and weeping over it. He devotes himself

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himſelf wholly to ſolitude; nothing but ſtillneſs pleaſes him. With Clementina, all his pleaſures are fled. He has already journied over the walks which he uſed to take in the company of his divinity; and when he approaches any object that Clementina was accuſtomed to notice above the reſt, he is involved in the depth of meditation, and appears to be recollecting every paſt occurrence. In a few minutes, however, the ſcene changes; and he calls eagerly on Clementina, a thouſand times, as if she had juſt parted from him, and he had doubts of her ſafety: but, alas! he receives no other anſwer than the echo of his own voice! At other times he aſſumes an air of cheerfulneſs; but it is a cheerfulneſs which diſtreſſes his friends; it proceeds not from the heart, but may be aſcribed to his diſtempered imagination.

In vain do I endeavour to ſtrengthen his reaſon; the ſucceſsful efforts of one minute are deſtroyed by the phantaſies of the next. I cannot confine his ideas to any

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certain object; and I begin to fear as much for his present condition, as I did for the excessive violence of his former disorder. His eyes have frequently the appearance of wildness; and, in general, he beholds every thing with gloomy indifference.

The Elder Edward takes so feeling a share in the sufferings of his son, that he is almost become an object of pity himself: nor am I exempted from participating very largely in that uneasiness which arises from beholding a dear friend in such a melancholy condition.

We intend to move him from hence in a short time: the house, the garden, the meadows, every thing, remind him of the happy days which he once passed here; and that remembrance feeds his sorrow, and may probably tend to shorten his days. I fear that it will prove a heavy task for me and his father; for he has already very earnestly begged permission of Mr. and Mrs. Marville, to continue here. Heaven grant that

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that he may voluntarily change his purpose!

I shall not fail to acquaint you with every incident of importance, relating to my unfortunate friend. His father would have written; but, to-day, he is more than commonly affected.

October 20, 179.

LETTER

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LETTER LIV.

THE MARQUIS D...., TO THE ELDER EDWARD.

IT would be needleſs, Sir, for me to ſtrive at giving you an idea of what I feel at the unhappy ſtate of your ſon. The narrative of his misfortunes has ſeverely affected me. Indeed, the ſufferings of the Bedford family and their friends, are univerſally talked of, and lamented.

You are conſcious, Sir, of my eſteem for you and for your worthy ſon: permit me therefore to adviſe, That he be at once conveyed from a ſpot that is fitted to retard his recovery: and, as he delights in ſolitude, bring him to my country ſeat, which ſuperabounds with that kind of pleaſure. Come, and enjoy the expiring autumn.

Though

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Though the winter is approaching, this retreat will not be divested of recreation; and, with the season, the course of Edward's perceptions may change.

Ever since the decease of my amiable lady, I have wished for the comfort of your presence. I therefore pray you to accept of my invitation: and solicit the noble-minded Dorval to take also a place in my house. His many eminent qualities, and particularly the sincere regard which he has always manifested for Edward, will contribute to the restoration and happiness of his friend. He will shew him, when time has reconciled him to the change of scene and situation, the positive folly of excessive sorrow.

Let him mourn the loss of that excellent young lady —— It is a debt which is due to her memory, and to her virtue— But let it not exceed the bounds of moderation.

Once

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Once more, I beſeech you not to refuſe my propoſal: the moſt beneficial conſequences may enſue, if you determine to indulge me; and as it is your reſolution to carry Edward from his preſent gloomy abode, where elſe can you receive a more unfeigned welcome?

October 29, 179-

LETTER

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LETTER LV.

THE ELDER EDWARD, TO THE MARQUIS D....

I Cannot refuſe your offer, my dear Marquis; an offer which promiſes ſome diminution of my ſufferings, which are unmeaſurably great. Alas! what painful ſhocks have aſſailed my fatherly heart, ſince the commencement of this fatal journey which I undertook with my ſon! that ſon, whoſe happineſs I had fondly planned, by giving him to the moſt amiable of women! But — heavens! — muſt this diſappointment always render him miſerable! ſhall it continue to impair his health, till he becomes a ſacrifice to the ſenſibility of his nature!—That ſon, who was the joy of my life, is become an object of compaſſion before my eyes. My own health is much injured;

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injured; and, if I do not err in my opinion, my mortal career is drawing to a close.

I have acquainted Edward with your generous proposal; and the solitariness that reigns around your mansion, coincides with his wishes. He hesitated not to say, that he should prefer the honour of your company to his present situation. Dorval has kindly promised to accompany us; although the heavy duties of his official post will not permit him to be long absent.

Ah! my friend, what a woeful change will you perceive in Edward! You will read in his face, most legibly imprinted, the marks of sorrow and despair: all his hopes are fled, with the rueful loss of Clementina. Indeed, I cannot call her sad fate to mind, without emotion: but it resembled her previous misfortunes! —— O God! what a dreadful end! — But I must be silent; or the horrible subject will distract me.

Expect

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Expect us in the course of a few weeks, when I hope my son will be capable of undertaking the journey. The good Mr. and Mrs. Murville also intend to leave this place shortly: it reminds them, but too often, of what they ought, at least sometimes, to forget. Farewel!

November 8, 179.

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LETTER LVI.

MRS. MURVILLE, TO JULIA.

IT is then disclosed to me at last!——O God! she is no more! the dear, the unfortunate Clementina! Has heaven restored me to health, then, to mourn for new misfortunes; to mourn, unpitied by the world, whose censures I must bear; to mourn, with Mr. Murville alone, the loss of all my relations. You, Julia, and your parents, are all that remain to us. You, henceforth, shall have the place in my heart which Clementina occupied — Clementina! — Heaven! --- I tremble as I imprint her name on my paper--- Clementina! sweet innocent! is, alas! severed from her desponding aunt, by an unlooked for, by a tremendous death! -- Clementina, my comfort, and my hope!

Her

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Her rigid virtue, the greatness of her soul, occasioned the direful calamity. The pure, the exalted, the delicate affection, which she bore the young Edward, induced her to fly; and this flight, alas! was at the expence of her life. Edward, also, and his father, have suffered beyond description on her account.—Now, too, have we lost the pleasure of their company. Yesterday they left us.

I already sigh for the moment which shall bring me to you. I stand, Julia, in need of your comfort: you will not refuse it me for the short time which I may survive my sufferings. The dishonour which is brought on our family, compels me to shun the world: I can no longer enjoy society. Must I not inevitably sink under these reflections! All earthly happiness is for ever vanished: my eyes, that are almost closed with weeping, encounter none but hateful objects, that pierce my heart. But I will drop the pen, lest I add to the grief of my dear Julia.

LETTER LVII.

DORVAL, TO MR. MURVILLE.

BEHOLD us, Sir, approaching still nearer to the perfection of human misery: it seems as if fate will never cease to follow my unfortunate, my pity-worthy friend. He has now lost all his dearest connexions!

Some short time after our arrival at the country-seat of the Marquis D....., the elder Edward was seized with an apoplectic fit, of so violent a nature, that he lay three whole days deprived of his senses, and, at the end of that period, expired under the agony of a second attack. Edward, upon the whole, discovered a fortitude, while the life of his dear father hung so dreadfully in suspense, that raised my

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wonder. All, all, are now loſt to this unhappy young man, for ever. O God! muſt then that father, who was ſo dear to him, thus ſpeedily be ſnatched away!---Alas! Sir, I fear that this laſt and unexpected ſhock will prove fatal to my poor friend. We had the great difficulty in removing him from the corpſe of his dear father! he wildly inſiſted on being entombed with it.---Heavens! how am I affected, at retracing ſome of the particulars of this mournful ſcene! The circumſtances are of ſo melancholy a nature, that I muſt entreat your forgiveneſs for ending thus abruptly.

January 2, 179.

Here is a chasm of eight or nine months. In the mean time, at the particular request of the Marquis D..., Edward continued to reside with him; sending orders to a trusty agent in Edinburgh, with full power to settle his affairs.—Edward, also, seconded by the Marquis, prevailed on Dorval to resign his employments, and in future to reside with them.

EDWARD.

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EDWARD, TO HIS RELATION IN SCOTLAND.

YOU ask me, dear Sir, for a narrative of all that has befallen me, since I left the residence of my Clementina. Can I refuse this to you, whom I so highly esteem, and even reverence! although a recollection of some of the incidents will agonise my feelings.

I left, then, that mansion which had once been so dear to me — that mansion from whence I had lost the dear mistress of my heart. — I removed myself, with painful regret, from the good Mr. and Mrs. Murville. We travelled expeditiously, and of course soon found ourselves under the friendly roof of the Marquis D..... But, alas! this change of scene and situation produced no favourable effect on the gloom of my mind. — I saw myself, indeed,

in

in a lonely, undiſturbed retreat, which, of all others, pleaſed me the moſt.

But---O God!---another ſtroke of fate awaited, to ſtrike me anew!---After an illneſs of three ſhort days, I saw myſelf bereaved of the beſt, of the tendereſt of fathers. A father, whoſe whole ſtudy it was to render my life bearable, to be thus haſtily ſnatched from me by death!---Dorval and the Marquis alone remained to me: and, if I had been deprived, at this period, of the preſence of the former, certainly I muſt have ſunk under this accumulation of human diſappointment. Before I knew the pangs of miſery, I never reflected on the crime of ſuicide without entertaining a juſt ſenſe of its enormity: and the impreſſion which thoſe conſiderations had left on my mind, happily reſiſted the horrid impulſes of my diſtempered imagination. I long ſuffered, from an exceſſive lowneſs of ſpirits, and often was incapable of leaving my chamber. At length, Dorval, overcome by my entreaties, and impelled by the

true

true friendship which he always bore me, consented to withdraw himself from the inquietudes of a public life, and to reside wholly with me and the good Marquis. But, preparatory to the completion of this object, it was impossible to avoid a painful separation for a few weeks, in order that he might adjust his numerous concerns, and resign a post, the duties of which were too heavy for a man independent of the world. This interval, though short, appeared far otherwise to me; till, at length, his return most amply compensated me for what I had suffered at his absence.

The worthy Marquis omitted no attentions that he thought would render the hours agreeable; but seldom were his endeavours crowned with success. Often was I in the company of several noble friends of the Marquis, who came to visit him; but grief continued to occupy my heart, and sadness and gloom remained on my countenance. The pleasure of promiscuous society, was not equal to the charms

of

of ſtillneſs and ſecluſion. I therefore commenced gardener, and even excelled the labourer who held the office. I pruned, I planted, and I ſowed: it was my favourite recreation. Often, however, did I retire to a diſtant grove, and call on the fleeting ſpirit of Clementina to witneſs my ſorrows and my conſtancy. Often, too, did I mourn the loſs of the moſt affectionate of fathers, to whoſe memory I shall always, at certain ſeaſons, shed a tear. A thouſand times, when thus alone, did I gaze on and kiſs the invaluable portrait of my Clementina, uttering ſigh after ſigh, till the bowers, and the groves, re-echoed back my lamentations, as if bemoaning in uniſon.

Hunting was the only amuſement in which Dorval delighted: he frequently invited me to be one of the party; and I never refuſed him. Once, in particular, allured by a remarkable fine day in the month of Auguſt, and being by ourſelves, we ſtrayed farther from home than had hitherto been our cuſtom. We found ourſelves,

ſelves, on a ſudden, in the avenues of a wood which we had never ſeen before, and where the moſt ſolemn ſilence ſeemed to prevail. As we advanced further into this foreſt, how divinely were we welcomed by its feathered inhabitants! This charming ſpot, for a while, banished from our thoughts the pleaſures of the chace. 'Ah! dear 'Dorval,' I exclaimed, 'what a tranſporting place is this! how conſonant to my 'preſent ideas! How agreeable does this 'ſolitary retreat appear, as we glance at 'the hateful amuſements of a city life! 'There, mankind exiſt in a kind of never-'ceaſing ſtupefaction, that betrays them 'from one unmeaning pleaſure to another; 'and impels them to form new ideas and 'new ſchemes, in the midſt of what, a little 'before, ſeemed to promiſe the ſummit of 'enjoyment. Thus do their lives unſuc-'cefully paſs away; and, in the vortex of 'confuſion, they have neither leiſure nor 'inclination, nor opportunity, to contem-'plate and admire the native beauties of 'the univerſe. But in ſuch enchanting

'ſeclu-

'seclusions as these, our pleasures, though 'numerous, are ever varying; are ever 'producing a thousand changes; that in-'struct us to worship and to reverence the 'universal Author of all.'

The afternoon was far advanced, before we thought of returning back. Scarcely had we reached the road, ere we saw a horse, who had thrown his rider, galloping towards us: by the elegance of his caparison, it was apparent that he belonged to some person of distinction. As the animal approached us, we placed our guns cross-wise before him, and he immediately stopped: having seized him by the bridle, we led him back; and, when we had proceeded about half a mile, we discovered a gentleman, in a hunting dress, lying on the ground. He was struggling to rise; but, without our seasonable aid, it is more than probable that he would have lain there the whole night, that part of the country being seldom frequented by ordinary travellers. —I thanked Heaven, that had thus furnished

nished me with an opportunity of assisting this unfortunate stranger, who, in the fall, had broken his arm. After politely thanking us for the attention we had shewn him, he informed us that he was Lord S.....; that he had been out, from the dawn of the morning, with a party of friends, enjoying the pleasures of the chace; that he had accidentally separated from them; and that his horse, having suddenly taken fright on the border of the adjacent ditch, he had unluckily fallen off as the animal leaped over. We were, at this time, about three miles from home; while Lord S..... was more than twenty: we therefore requested him to accompany us, that he might receive the immediate assistance of a surgeon; and he cheerfully accepted our offer. We led his horse very gently along, fearing that a hard pace might put him to unnecessary pain, and convey danger to the fractured limb. In this manner, we effected our return, when I gave every necessary order that the situation of his lordship required.

Lord S..... appeared to be amiable and unreſerved. The Marquis was no ſtranger to his character; although, their perſonal acquaintance was but ſlight. His lordship requeſted that a ſervant might be diſpatched to his lady, with a letter which he had written, acquainting her of the accident that had befallen him, and which would render his abſence neceſſary for a short time: and inſtant orders were accordingly given.

The ſurgeon, who was by this time arrived, having inſpected the fracture, removed the apprehenſions which we had entertained for the ſafety of his lordship. —Though he felt exceſſive pain, he was by no means dejected; and, if he ſuffered any inward uneaſineſs, it was on Lady S.....'s account, who, he feared, would imagine his ſituation to be much worſe than he had repreſented it. The next day he talked of leaving us; but, at length, overcome by our united perſuaſions, he conſented to forbear a little longer, when he

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he might travel with leſs hazard and inconvenience. On the fourth viſit, his ſurgeon declared, that, within fourteen days, he might expect to be reſtored to the full uſe of his arm.

His lordship entreated us to honour him with our preſence at his ſeat, as often as we could make it agreeable; adding, that he hoped his recent misfortune, as it had occaſioned our meeting, ſo that it might, alſo, be the means of a durable friendship, henceforth, between us: that the ſolitude which we loved, was perfectly conſonant to his own conceptions of happineſs; and that his friends, though few in number, he had ſelected, with a reference to their merit, and not to their rank or influence.

At the end of five days, Lord S..... fixed on the next morning for his departure. Dorval and I conceived it our duty to accompany our noble gueſt home, and lead him to the arms of his anxious conſort.

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I muſt here pauſe awhile: this was an important period of my life. And my heart, without any obvious reaſon, formed a prophetic ſomething, which I could not clearly comprehend. I felt an emotion at this moment, which I had never experienced before.

.....

Early in the morning I ſtepped into the carriage, with my fellow travellers; and, as we proceeded but ſlowly, it was late in the afternoon ere we arrived at his lordship's ſeat. Scarcely had we left the chaiſe, when our ears were aſſailed with the ſhriek of a young woman. Lady S..... immediately came to meet us, and fell with tranſport into the arms of her conſort. I therefore imagined, that what we had juſt heard, muſt have proceeded from her ladyship; but as ſoon as we had entered the houſe, it appeared to have been the lady's own ſervant, who, juſt as we deſcended from the carriage, ſtood, it ſeems,

in

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in the front of the carriage. This ſingular incident excited the attention of everybody.

Lady S..... received us with uncommon affability; and she is, in good truth, a moſt lovely woman. She is not more than twenty years of age; and yet appears to be adorned with every female charm, and to poſſeſs every polite and uſeful accomplishment. My lord, alſo, is ſomewhat about the ſame age.

In a short time, a ſervant entered the room, and informed Lady S..... that her maid, being ſeized with a ſudden indiſpoſition, was fallen down in a ſwoon. She immediately haſtened to her, impelled by the moſt humane ſenſations, in order to afford, and to procure, her every poſſible reſtorative.

My lord could not withhold his ſurpriſe at this incident: nor was I wholly indifferent on the occaſion. Indeed, I felt

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an unusual perturbation glide through my whole frame. The lady shortly returned to us, in a discomposed state of mind; saying, that the young woman continued in the same alarming state, in spite of all the remedies which she had applied. It was therefore determined to send for a physician.

When the hour of dinner arrived, we sat down to table; but the uneasiness which Lady S..... felt, communicated a portion of gloom to every-one present; insomuch, that the conversation became dull and languid. In a few minutes, however, it was signified to the lady, that the efforts of the physician had been attended with success; that her woman was now recovered; and that, as she first opened her eyes, she feebly articulated the name of EDWARD! ——'Heavens!' exclaimed I, 'what can this mean?—My lady, pray what is the name of this young woman?' 'Cecilia ....., Sir,' answered she. 'Do you, then, know her?' At the mention of this name,

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name, I found myself so strongly agitated, that I instantly removed from the table; and, without the application of timely remedies, I certainly should have fainted. When I was somewhat more composed, I cried, 'O my lady! this worthy girl 'was, once, the attendant of the unfortu-'nate Clementina Bedford! She was called 'Cecilia .....' Neither my lord, nor his consort, could comprehend the meaning of these words: and my heart was too abundantly full to say more. Dorval, however, compassionating my sufferings, eased me of the painful task. He briefly related my misfortunes, as interwoven with those of the Bedford family; and, in our attentive friends, it excited astonishment, compassion, and even tears, which, at length, they with difficulty restrained. I begged permission to speak to this young woman; but had the mortification to be informed, that she would not then consent to see any person who did not belong to the family.

Cecilia

Cecilia loved my dear Clementina, who, in reality, treated her with all the gentleneſs and regard of a fond ſiſter. She had, alſo, acquired the eſteem of Lady S..... in an equal degree, who ſignified her wishes to her with the greateſt tenderneſs.

I therefore imagined, that the melancholy fate of Clementina had forcibly recurred to her mind, as she ſaw me alight from the chaiſe; and that her conſequent reflections on the premature loſs of ſo beneficent a lady, had produced thoſe alarming ſymptoms which followed. I repeated my requeſt to Lady S....., that she would furnish me with an opportunity of ſpeaking with Cecilia, from whom I expected ſome minute particulars, reſpecting my departed fair-one, that might tend to afford me a momentary ray of comfort. She very obligingly promiſed to uſe her beſt endeavours, that my wishes might be gratified; at the ſame time obſerving, that it was Cecilia's cuſtom, towards the even-

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ing, to take a walk in the garden, alone; that she had often followed her; and remarked, that, at those moments, she frequently was, or had been, shedding tears.

I therefore waited with impatience till the evening; but, with its arrival, my expectations vanished. She was too unwell to leave her chamber.

This disappointment, however trifling it may appear, aroused all my past disquietudes: my soul was racked, at the retrospect of every hateful incident. The uncured wounds of my heart gushed out anew. Dorval, and Lord and Lady S....., endeavoured to calm the tumult; but in vain: the emotion of my mind was so great, that frequently I could not express, by words, my sense of their friendly attentions.

At length it was time to retire for the night; and I was shewn to my apartment. But, alas! I could enjoy no rest: a thousand

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ſand circumſtances, in quick ſucceſſion, occupied my thoughts, till the morning appeared; when I aroſe, and haſtened into the garden, where a few labourers were already at work.

After walking a conſiderable time, in deep meditation, inſomuch that I hardly knew in what part of the globe I was ſituated, I returned into the houſe, and proceeded to the apartment of Dorval, whom I awoke. I deſired him to accompany me, purpoſing to reſume my walk. This dear friend, without heſitating a moment, acceeded to my requeſt; and we wandered together, through the moſt delightful parterre, that the imagination can conceive. From hence we proceeded to the bowers and the groves; and one of the former, which was more concealed than the reſt, I particularly admired: the rays of the ſun moſt beautifully pervaded the ſurrounding foliage.——Swelling as was then my heart of grief, how little did I imagine that the coming hour would render me

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the happieſt of the human race! —— In this ſilent ſpot, we preſently diſtinguished the deep ſighs of a female, who ſeemed to be in an adjoining walk. 'Who can this 'be, my friend?' exclaimed I to Dorval. 'Let us ſee, and, if it be poſſible, comfort 'the fair mourner.' We had gone but a few paces, when we obſerved a young lady at ſome little diſtance before us, whoſe ſteps were ſlow and ſolemn. So ſoon as she heard the ſound of footſteps behind her, she turned round; and, ſeeing us, uttered a violent ſcream, and fell to the ground.

And who was she! —— Righteous Heaven! —— CLEMENTINA! — the adorable CLEMENTINA herſelf — CLEMENTINA, for whoſe imagined death I had not yet ceaſed to mourn —— CLEMENTINA, whom I had conſidered as loſt to me, and to the world, for ever! — Joy, tranſport, aſtonishment, all ran wildly through my whole frame --- CLEMENTINA! was the only word I could pronounce, and with that magic ſound

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ſound echoing on my lips, I fell ſenſeleſs into the arms of Dorval, as he was about to ſuccour the dear, proſtrate object of my love.

It happened fortunately, that all this took place at no great diſtance from the houſe. Some one either heard or ſaw us, and ran to inform Lord S..... and his lady of the circumſtance; who immediately came to our aſſiſtance. A general ſtare of aſtonishment, indeed, quickly circulated throughout the whole family.—They conveyed us to an apartment of this noble building, where I ſoon found myſelf reſtored to the moſt delightful ſtate of recollection. 'Heaven!' exclaimed I, 'is Clementina, then, given to me again!'

Caſting my eyes around, I perceived my long-loſt love, as yet unrecovered, in the arms of Lady S....., who had thrown herſelf into an arm-chair, the better to ſupport her. My good fortune animated me with new ſtrength: I threw myſelf at the

feet

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feet of Clementina; who, with extreme difficulty, was at length recovered. When she opened her eyes, and saw me prostrate on the floor, before her, she fell back into the arms of Lady S....., exclaiming, 'Ah! Edward! — dear Edward! — leave '— leave me to myself! — Clementina, 'degraded and debased, is no longer worthy 'of your notice.'

'Heavens! — Clementina!' I replied, rising, 'I leave you again! — I, who have 'unceasingly mourned your loss! — And 'do you command me? — No! rather let 'me expire at your feet, and end my suf-'ferings with my life! — Now, that ma-'lignant fate ceases to pursue me, ought I 'to refuse the blessings of heaven? Can I 'view her with apathy, whom I have 'always adored with enthusiasm? Can I 'see her providentially restored to me, one 'moment, and fly from her the next? — 'No! my Clementina! — I will never act 'so inconsistently. You are spotless; you 'have committed no crime; unless, indeed,

'it is criminal to have been more unfortu-
'nate than the rest of woman-kind. You
'have already sacrificed too largely to
'punctilio. The discriminating part of
'mankind are disposed to commiserate those
'who suffer unavoidable afflictions; and,
'the censures of the unthinking vulgar,
'ought not to agitate the bosom of inno-
'cence.'

I again fell at her feet, and adduced every argument, which the most passionate love could suggest, to induce her to crown my hopes. Every one present dropped the tear of complacency, at beholding this interesting scene; this unexpected interview. Pleasure, mingled with astonishment, was observable in the countenances of all who encircled us. My feelings may probably be imagined; they cannot easily be depictured.

Clementina looked stedfastly at me for a few moments, without uttering a word; but the fervor with which she received my out-

outstretched hand, imparted to me a considerable share of comfort; and I involuntarily pressed her's to my lips, in a tumult of transport.

My lord and his amiable lady suggested, that it would perhaps be adviseable for me to quit the apartment for a short time; that Clementina might have leisure to recover from the discomposure which this singular event had occasioned. I consented, though with extreme reluctance; as I observed that she was yet excessively disordered. I therefore retired, with Doryal, who led me into the garden, to enjoy the restoring air. I took him by the hand, and entreated that he would employ that eloquence which rendered him so irresistible, to combat and overcome the scruples of Clementina, that she might be induced to acquiesce with my most ardent wishes. 'You know, my friend,' said I, 'you know, that she never strove to 'conceal the pure, the exalted affection, 'which she bears me; an affection, so ad-

'mirably refined, that it impelled her to a 'desperate flight, left our purposed union, 'after what had happened, should cast an 'imputation on my character: a flight, too, 'that highly endangered my life. She 'left me, alas! fearing that, if a progeny 'should be the result of our marriage, 'that hereafter they might be reproached 'with the ignominious fate of her brother. 'Possibly,' continued I, 'her sentiments 'are not yet changed: on the contrary, I 'fear that she retains the same dignified 'opinion of honour and delicacy, with 'whose rigid dictates, in the present in-'stance, I would most cheerfully dispense. 'I fear that she will resolve to fly from 'me a second time, to avoid the accept-'ance of my hand: a dreadful alternative, 'which, if I cannot prevent, I shall not be 'solicitous to survive. Convey to her 'an idea of what I have already endured; 'and say it has been a comparative state of 'happiness, when the future is considered, 'should she continue obdurate.'

Scarcely

Scarcely had I ended, when we observed Lord S... approaching us. I flew to meet him, to know the situation of my Clementina. He was happy to inform me, he said, that she was again perfectly herself. He also added, that shortly after I had left the apartment, she, but half recovered, pronounced my name several times, with ineffable tenderness; asking Lady S... where I then was; and wondering that I had left her so soon. Her ladyship advised her to repose a little, as she seemed to stand in need of rest; while she assured her that my absence would be of short continuance, and that I would hasten to throw myself into her arms. On this, Clementina shed a flood of tears, and declared that it was not permitted her to become my bride. That, on this declaration, his lordship had deemed it necessary to conduct me to her.

Heavens! how fortunately did this day end! — Accompanied by my lord and Dorval, I hastened to the presence of

Clementina. Oh! how lovely did she at this moment appear in my eyes! —— She sat close to Lady S....., their arms encircled in each other's. When she saw me again approach her, she rose up, and came to meet me: I ran to her embrace — heavens! what an embrace! — How extatic! how transporting!

This blissful correspondence of the soul, having somewhat ceased, I related to her all that had occurred since our unfortunate separation. I described my sufferings, and informed her of my illness, in consequence of the rumour of her death. I stated the general grief and anxiety of her friends, particularly of her aunt and uncle Murville; with the death of my dear father. The gloomy detail excited a flood of tears from her fine eyes. She was above all, forcibly struck at the sudden decease of my affectionate parent. I took this opportunity of renewing my solicitations: 'Dear Clementina!' I exclaimed, 'it now remains with you to render me

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'the most happy, or the most miserable, of 'human beings. My recent inquietudes 'have affected you: and can you resolve 'then to aggravate my despair? Should 'you persist in opposing my supremest 'wish, I shall no longer strive to oppose 'the torrent that will inevitably overwhelm 'me!' I threw myself at her feet, and impassionately beseeched, that she would forego those unnecessary scruples, which impeded our mutual happiness.—She was greatly agitated; and, after a momentary silence, she affectionately assisted me to rise, speaking thus: 'Ah! Edward, it seems 'as if fate had once more willed our union. 'But, O God! what, than shame, can re'sult from such nuptials!—Why will 'you not exert that greatness of soul, that 'sublimity of thought, for which you are 'distinguished, and cease, voluntarily cease, 'to pursue so hopeless a passion. I sled, 'that you might forget me, and my mis'fortunes; or, at least, if that were impos'sible, that the propriety of the motives 'that occasioned my secession, might even-

'tually

'nually afford you a rational share of com-
'fort. But, though I forced myself from
'you, as I imagined, for ever, still did I
'sedulously preserve your dear portrait,
'which, daily, dispensed me comfort, as
'I pressed it to my lips, or sprinkled it
'with my tears! Let this mark of my
'affection for you suffice: let me entreat
'you to desist! Clementina earnestly begs
'that, from henceforth, you will no more
'speak to her in the language of love.—
'Virtue, honour, your future welfare, the
'censures of the judging world, all stimu-
'late me to pronounce the painful, but
'indispensable injunction. Instead of bear-
'ing the title of your Wife, I shall be
'sufficiently happy to be considered as
'your Friend—in the purest sense of the
'word.

'No! lovely Clementina!' I replied,
'nothing but Death can henceforward di-
'vide us! Let us therefore no longer de-
'lay to interchange our vows at the altar.
'Your arguments are consonant to the pu-

'rity

'rity of your mind; but, to an adorer 'like me, they are not convincing. Let 'us no longer protract the consummation 'of our engagements, if you would not 'see me expire at your feet!'

Lord S....., his amiable consort, and Dorval, added their solicitations to mine: on which the adorable girl, after a short pause, requested that I would allow her a few hours for re-consideration. Esteeming this a favourable omen, I embraced her with transport. 'Heavens!' cried I, in broken accents, 'you shall not, 'you cannot, Clementina, any longer refuse 'to heal the wounds of my heart! — to 'raise me, the most dejected of human 'beings, to the supremest state of felicity!'

It was at this time about eleven in the morning. Lady S.....therefore reminded Clementina, that it was necessary to repair to the toilette; while my lord invited me and Dorval to walk with him in

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in the park. Intoxicated with joy, I accompanied these worthy friends; and, in our return, we rested awhile in the alcove, where the sun of my happiness emitted the first ray. I took this opportunity of giving his lordship a full detail of all that had befallen Clementina and myself; without palliating the offences, or concealing the fate, of Henry Bedford. And he was greatly affected at the melancholy narrative.

As we from thence proceeded to the summer-house, Clementina and Lady S.... came to meet us. Her ladyship, taking the hand of my angel, presented it to me, saying, 'Receive, Sir, from me, your Clementina! — May you enjoy the most perfect happiness in the possession of each other!'

I could not for a moment stifle the transports of my soul. 'Heaven! — Clementina! —' cried I, 'do you, then, consent to be mine for ever?' — I seized her hand, and imprinted on it a thou-

thousand kisses. 'Ah! dear Edward,' replied this heavenly girl, 'could I persist 'in refusing you my hand, who have suf- 'fered so much in the endeavour to obtain 'it!—Our meeting was at least singular, 'if not providential; and, certainly, I 'could not have survived a second sepa- 'ration!'

'Adorable Clementina!' I answered, 'henceforth I will live only for you!'

Every one present partook feelingly of our joy. This day of extasy, of bliss, can never be blotted from my memory.—What a happy day was it for me!

At length, the hour of dinner being come, Lord S..... politely escorted Clementina; while I, with equal attention, conducted her ladyship to the dining-room.

I now found myself once more in a circle of dear friends—Clementina, Dorval, and Lord and Lady S..... I imbibed

bibed a sincere regard for the two latter, on first seeing them. Indeed, their general conduct, is fitted to win the esteem of every body. Now did I fondly picture to myself long years of coming happiness, which nothing could impede, but death.

Lord S..... entreated us to continue with him till after the celebration of our nuptials; and we accepted his friendly offer with the truest heart-felt satisfaction.

I dispatched my servant, the next morning, with a letter to the good Marquis D...., in which I communicated to him all that had occurred since our departure from his seat. I also, at the same time, sent to the inconsolable Mr. Murville, informing him of my accidental interview with Clementina.----Clementina wrote to her friend Julia, and to her aunt, by the same conveyance.

In the evening, several of his lordship's neighbouring friends paid him a visit; and

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it was diverting to obſerve the ſilent aſtonishment which they manifeſted, on ſeeing the lady's maid ſitting ſo familiarly at table with her miſtreſs. Lady S..... kept them in ſuſpenſe for a ſhort time, and increaſed her attentions towards Clementina: after which, she gave them the outlines of our hiſtory, and obligingly ſaid that the young lady was her diſtant relation.

Clementina quickly convinced all who were preſent, that she was infinitely ſuperior to the character which she had aſſumed: and, diveſted of partiality, which too often narrows our perceptions, I may juſtly ſay, that she eclipſed all the females, who ſurrounded her, as well in the acuteneſs of her converſation, as in perſonal loveliness. But, in juſtice to those ladies, I muſt obſerve, that they ſeemed to be conſcious of her pre-eminent endowments; while they ſympathiſed in her misfortunes.

It is now fourteen days since this happy discovery took place. Yesterday was the time appointed for the celebration of our nuptials; and the ceremony was performed, with all consistent privacy, in his lordship's chapel. This day of triumph and happiness, was cheerfully passed in the society of a few chosen friends: among whom was the worthy Marquis D..... The satisfaction which this venerable man expressed on seeing Clementina, whom he was pre-disposed to admire, is beyond my powers of description. It was so intensive, that the tears rolled down his cheeks, while his tongue, for a short time, lost the power of utterance.

Now am I, in reality, the most happy, the most fortunate, of mortals: even my past disappointments give a zest to my present felicity.—Felicity! — It is a state of blessedness more than terrene! for am I not indissolubly united to her whom my soul adored? to her, in whom I daily discover new

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new attractions, new charms, new incitements to admiration!

We yet remain at the seat of Lord S.....: but, in the course of a few days, we purpose to set out for the residence of the good Marquis, where, for the present at least, it is our intention to remain.

Lord and Lady S..... are added to the number of our friends; and they have kindly promised to accompany us to the end of our journey, and also to tarry with us for a few days.

Heavens! how I shuddered at hearing my Clementina relate the narrative of what befel her, after she fled from her friends! I have, my dear Sir, inclosed you a copy of it, taken from the original, as written by herself to Julia, her most intimate companion.

Yesterday we received letters from

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Mrs. Murville and from Julia; expressive of their unbounded joy at hearing that the rumour of Clementina's death was ill-founded. They purpose to make us a visit in the course of the ensuing Lent.—Oh! what a glorious prospect have I before me! How will this interview increase the happiness of my angelic bride! And how will her satisfactions add to mine!

It is true, that we have been severely wounded by the hand of Misfortune; but, at length, am not I---is not Clementina---most amply recompensed!---The loss of that esteem which she so much dreaded, was merely a chimera; which, though productive of temporary disquietude, has contributed to embellish the glorious change of prospect.

I cannot, however, avoid lamenting, in secret, that my father was not an eye-witness of this happy reverse of fortune! ---So good a man, so kind a parent, in the full possession of all his faculties, unimpaired

paired by age, and a ſtranger to diſeaſe, till the period of his diſſolution!—Heart-rending ſeparation! cruel Death!——But I muſt refrain: for as it is not permitted us to penetrate into the deſigns of Providence, it is our duty to bend to its diſpenſations, however ſeemingly repugnant to our calculations of happineſs.

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NARRATIVE

OF

Clementina's Adventures,

AFTER

HER FLIGHT.

ADDRESSED TO HER FRIEND JULIA.

SEE here, then, my dear Julia, the Narrative which I promised you in my last letter; a narrative which brings tears into my eyes, and interrupts, for a-while, the current of my felicity.

Do not imagine, though for some months I have ceased to correspond with you,

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you, that my affection has undergone the smallest change, or diminution. No, my dear friend! — Often did I fancy myself in your presence; often did I seemingly speak to you; often, in idea, did I fondly embrace you.

You know that my Edward is descended from a noble family; and that there are yet living several of his high-minded relations, who derive their happiness from dignity of birth, and the extension of possessions. Having, therefore, nothing to adduce in favour of my ancestry, but their virtues; enjoying but a slender portion of riches; and involved in my brother's disgrace; I anticipated their censures of a marriage, under all these worldly disadvantages; and, in fine, resolved to strengthen myself against the possibility of female irresolution, by withdrawing from the reach of my lover. But why, then, you will doubtless say; why not inform a tender uncle and aunt, or an affectionate, a bosom friend, of the place of my retreat? That,

that

that was the consideration, which occasioned the bitterest pangs that I endured; that nearly dissolved me in my tears. The love which united me to you and those dear relations, often weakened, and nearly overcame, my purpose. One moment did I resolve to confide all my designs to your sympathising bosom; but then, again, was I intimidated by the fear, that compassion for the unhappy Edward might instigate you to frustrate my intentions.

I saw myself, therefore, constrained to act with the most painful caution; with a caution that even required the aid of artifice; in leaving the noble-minded, the generous Edward, and all those who loved me. I conceived it to be the only practicable remedy that remained, not only to afford my own mind tranquillity, but to blot out my misfortunes from the memory of those who could not reflect on them with indifference. I was not unacquainted with the salutary effects which time and absence produce on the human mind.

I hope,

I hope, dear Julia, that, however you may condemn my motives, that your philanthropy will prompt you to pardon the indiscretion itself.

Edward informed me, by letter, that his father had, a second time, consented to our nuptials; and that he should, in a few days, throw himself into my arms. Heavens! how severely did I suffer, on receiving this intimation! Often did I, trembling, take up the pen, to bid him an eternal farewel; and as often fell it from my hand. At length, however, my previous resolution to shun his addresses, enabled me to accomplish the agonising task.

I chose the next morning for my departure; and therefore intimated to my dear aunt, that it was my intention to stay with you for a few days. I freeze at the recollection of this momentous period, that I never expected to survive. The painful necessity of imposing on such tender relatives, added anguish to every other overwhelming

whelming thought. —— When the hour approached that was to date my flight, I often thought that the perturbation, which I could not conceal; that my tears, which involuntarily flowed; would manifest the falsity of my pretences. I feared, lest I should betray myself; incur the shame of acting disingenuously; and, withal, leave my purpose unaccomplished.

I took a pathetic farewel of my uncle and aunt, and of my maid Cecilia; the latter of whom had strongly recommended herself to my favour. The words faltered on my lips; I was vehemently agitated: but the goodness of my friends led them to recur back, for the latent cause of it. Oh! Heaven! that I could forget what I suffered, when Mr. Murville presented me his hand to assist me to my seat!

Half distracted —— but a few removes from insanity —— I travelled for some hours, without knowing, and without considering, where I was. I scarcely knew if I were plough-

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ploughing the foaming billows, or travelling, more securely, on the shore. .... At length, arriving at the village where I had previously ordered my guide to halt, I fortunately collected my scattered senses; and ordered him to alight, and procure me a careful porter, to carry my trunk, which contained a small part of my cloaths, and about one hundred and fifty pounds, in money and valuables.—— When the porter came, I discharged my conductor, after giving him letters to my respective friends, which I had written the preceding day.

I now beheld myself alone in the world: there was no one near, to pity or upbraid me. I was divided from all who were dear to me: they, too, were unconscious of the decisive measures which I had pursued. When I reflected on the dangers which yet hovered around me, I devoutly beseeched Heaven to cut asunder my thread of hateful existence; but, in vain.

When

When we had loſt ſight of my guide, I asked the good man who carried my trunk, to conduct me to an inn in the moſt retired quarter of the village, where I might reſt for a few hours. He led me to a place that accorded with my wishes: when I fell into a chair, in ſuch an agony of mind, that I firmly believed my laſt hour was at hand. I am truly aſtonished at the courage, which, in a short time, ſucceeded theſe moments of deſpondency, and enabled me to perſevere.

The fear of being overtaken, now roſe ſuperior to every other conſideration. I therefore reſolved to leave this place wi h-out loſs of time; and for that purpoſe de-ſired that a poſt-chaiſe might be procured with all convenient expedition, to convey me to M....

I was no ſooner ſeated in the chaiſe, than deſpair again overpowered my heart: dreading the conſequences of what I had done, often did I reſolve on returning to my

my relations. But the fear of meeting my dear Edward, as often disconcerted the immature resolution. I felt myself incompetent to withstand his persuasions. I dreaded, what I now admire; his urbanity, his expanded soul, his generosity; in short, every good quality that ennobles mankind. I knew myself unworthy of his love, and therefore could not summon sufficient courage to give him a personal refusal. Convinced as I was, that he would sacrifice every consideration that opposed an alliance with me, how could I hope that my slender arguments would prevail! And, in my then state of mind, an acquiescence would have added to my misery, without detracting from his.

Tormenting myself with these, and a thousand other reflections, of equal importance, I arrived at M.... before I imagined the journey to have been half completed. It was, however, ten o'clock; and, after sitting down to a repast, rather to comply with the usage of the place, than

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from any indication of hunger, I was about to retire to bed; when a carriage driving furiously up the yard, I was struck with the most lively dread, that it was my uncle, or probably Edward, in pursuit of me. My heart throbbed violently; I trembled; and, with extreme anxiety, waited the eclaircissement. 'If all this,' thought I, 'be 'the result of a simple indiscretion, what 'must the unhardened guilty feel, in the 'moments of terror and distraft!'

Fortunately, as I then thought, my apprehensions proved illusory. But the possibility of the circumstance, made so forcible an impression on my mind, that I ordered fresh horses to be instantly got ready; and, at midnight, I again commenced my adventurous journey. At six in the morning, I came to W....., where a motherly woman, of a good character, resided, whom it was my intention to consult. She kept a perfumer's shop; and often travelling that road with my dear father, I had constantly purchased articles of her, at his particular

ticular instance; as, he said, he had known her husband, and was convinced that the widow merited encouragement. I therefore determined to request that, if she could not afford, she would, at least, procure, me a private lodging; conceiving, that it would be highly improper, on many accounts, to continue at an inn, especially unattended. My youth, and sex, forbade the adoption of such a measure. Having nothing farther, therefore, to consider on this subject, I ordered the coachman to set me down at Mrs. Holbin's. That was her name.

This worthy woman, to whom I owe infinite obligations, no sooner saw me, as I alighted, than she ran to meet me, with open arms: but her astonishment was great at seeing me alone. I told her that I was come, to solicit her advice; and immediately hurried into the parlour. However, in attempting to speak, my full heart discharged itself in a flood of tears; and it was a considerable time before I could proceed. At last, I said, that death had snatched my

affectionate father from me; that, through a series of losses, and unavoidable expences, my patrimony was involved; that I was left nearly destitute; that my native place was become hateful in my sight; and that, therefore, I had resolved to seek an asylum, that would not so often, and so painfully, remind me of the past.

Mrs. Holbin most kindly requested me to accept an apartment in her house; which, you may imagine, I did not refuse.—I immediately changed my name to that of Cecilia ....; and enjoined the good woman not to make known my residence to any person whatever, on any account, or on any pretence.

Having thus far succeeded in my wishes, and designs, I found myself strongly disposed to sleep; and, for a few hours, my cares subsided, and my misfortunes disappeared. But there is one common defect in our natures: the accomplishment of an object either appals us, or increases a

new

new desire. So I—having obtained a peaceful and reputable asylum, the uncertainty of which had occasioned no small share of my previous uneasiness—no sooner awoke, and found myself under the protecting roof of a friend, than I assimilated, in my mind, every idea that was calculated to render me desperate. I counted my little stock of wealth, and reckoned the days and months that it would probably last: and from this view of it, after admitting of contingencies, and a few presents to the truly unfortunate, to those who pine in secret, I found it inadequate to a life of independence. At length, however, I determined to consult Mrs. Holbin on the practicability of obtaining some employment at my needle.

Eight days after my arrival, I was attacked with a violent fever, which compelled me instantly to take my bed. It increased every day; till, at the end of the seventh, my medical attendants gave me over. Mrs. Holbin scarcely ever left my room; endeavouring to afford me all the

relief in her power; and to flatter me with indications of amendment, at such times as I was capable of listening to her. But, in those intervals, I inwardly smiled at death. I was prepared to meet its arrow, rather with transport than reluctance. I considered it to be the only cure for my corporeal and mental afflictions.—Three whole weeks I lay, in the most lamentable condition; an apparent victim to the grave. The skill of the faculty, and the power of medicine, had been exerted without any obvious effect; and "to be, or not to be," depended wholly on the revolutions of nature. It is not unusual, I have heard, for this disease, to produce its own remedy: at least, so it was in my case; for, after the physicians had ceased to prescribe, a change took place, and I gradually recovered: but, for a long time, I remained excessively weak. For this unexpected prolongation of life, I conceive myself to be indebted to Mrs. Holbin, who restricted me in nothing that I requested of her.

Alas!

Alas! thought I, for what was my life spared? The expences of my illness, had confusd my economical arrangements; all that I possessed, could but too easily be computed: and to ask for more, would ruin my project. The dread, therefore, of being shortly compelled to accept of some very subordinate situation, added to every other agonising pang. 'Heaven!' exclaimed I often; 'I, who formerly were 'loved, esteemed, and honoured, must now 'submit to be slighted and contemned!'—I imagined, that every one would view me with suspicion and distrust, and legibly read my debasement in my countenance. And, as I had resolved not to divulge the nature of my misfortunes, nor the cause of my servility, who could say to what an alarming extent my offences would be exaggerated? Calumny is a foul fiend, who indiscriminately attacks, and pierces, the innocent with the guilty. What, then, had I to hope, who carried concealment on my brow? In vain was the friendly countenance of Mrs. Halbin, when she saw me a

prey

prey to those bitter reflections! One day, in particular, she came into my apartment, shedding the big tear of compassion. She took me pathetically by the hand, saying, 'Ah! my dear young lady, you seem to 'have other afflictions than those you have 'disclosed. You know how partial I am 'to you; how much I esteem you; and 'the magnitude of my obligations to you 'and your family. I beseech you, there'fore, in the name of heaven! to conceal 'nothing from me. Open your heart, as 'to a bosom friend, nay, as to a fond mo'ther. Call me henceforth, by that ten'der name. Let me enjoy your confi'dence, and you shall indeed find me a 'second parent.'

This worthy woman embraced me with parental affection, and watered my bosom with her tears: nor was I able to refrain my own; for I wanted words to convey to her a sense of my gratitude. — At length, I sobbed, almost unintelligibly, 'Yes, I will give you that title; you shall

'be-

"be my mother; and I will, from this "moment, become your daughter. No "thing will I conceal from you; all, all, "shall you know.—I am the most unfor"tunate, the most miserable being, that ever "saw the light, that ever walked upon the "earth——!" My sighs, my sobs, would not permit me to say more; we remained for some minutes in each other's arms, intermingling our tears.

Heavens! what transcendent comfort does the troubled bosom experience, when it can impart its sorrows to a friend! How does it mitigate the stripes of fate! How does it mellow the wounded heart of sensibility! They who cannot feel, or who mock, the distresses of others, are improperly denominated human beings. And those who can betray a sacred confidence reposed in them, would, if placed by Nature in a sphere, excel the tigress in acts of horror! However, we sometimes meet with sincerity; and it renders us an easier prey to deception.

I im-

I imparted to Mrs. Holbin all those secrets which I had resolved to hide from the prying world; nor had I ever the smallest reason to repent the confidence which I placed in her. She was endued with a soul, formed for pity and compassion. Often was I compelled to stop, as I related my dismal tale, that she might dry up the flowing tears, and restrain the labouring sigh; but particularly when I mentioned Valcourt as the cause of my brother's undoing.

"No!" cried she, when I had ended, "you shall never leave me, while heaven preserves my health. My dear Cecilia, my daughter, shall know no want which I can anticipate or remove."

Gratitude and thankfulness filled my heart. I took the hand of my amiable benefactress, pressed it to my lips, and watered it with my tears. So much was I overcome, and astonished, at her signal generosity, that I could not otherwise express my

my feelings. — What a humane, what a liberal heart, did Mrs. Holbin possess? If the wealthy, and the great, can equal, most certainly they cannot surpass, this good woman, in the tender duties of humanity and beneficence!

I entreated her to disclose to me the cause of her singular emotion, at the mention of Valcourt's name. At this request she appeared to be greatly embarrassed; and it was after much hesitation that she replied, 'Alas! my Cecilia, I formerly lived as housekeeper to his unhappy father, who had been long a widower. The young man was then at other University, where he ran into the wildest excesses of dissipation; insomuch that the liberal allowance which he received every quarter, was wholly incompetent to his demands. Often had I occasion to observe the unhappiness of the good old gentleman on this account. Every letter which he sent, contained a request for fresh supplies. Once, in particular,

'nicular, desiring a larger sum than usual, 'his father came to no determination on 'the subject for several days. At length, 'reflecting perhaps, that the want of mo'ney might precipitate a gay young man 'into unjustifiable measures, he resolved 'to comply with his request. For this 'purpose, he sealed up the gold in a small 'leather bag, and also inclosed a letter; 'but with the purport of it I am unac'quainted. He, no doubt, admonished 'him to reform, on pain of his lasting dis'pleasure. A trusty servant, whom my 'master had shortly before engaged, was 'dispatched with it on horseback, and or'dered to use as much expedition as pos'sible. But, dreadful to say! when the 'poor fellow reached Newmarket Heath, 'he was stopped by a highwayman, who 'demanded his money. The man, fear'ing that the loss of the property which 'he had in charge, might impeach his cha'racter, at first refused to obey the ruffian-'like summons; but receiving the contents 'of a pistol in his body, he fell from the

'horse,

'horſe, and became an eaſy prey to the 'free-booter, who rifled his pockets, and 'then left him for dead.

'This public robber, this miſcreant, 'was Valcourt!——He returned to Ox-'ford, unnoticed and unperceived by any 'one; and haſtened to his chamber, to 'examine the booty which he had thus 'villainouſly acquired. But how great 'was his ſurpriſe, his confuſion, on diſ-'covering, annexed to the gold, a letter 'addreſſed to himſelf, in the hand-writing 'of his father! As no one was an eye-'witneſs of his behaviour at this moment, 'it is impoſſible to form a true idea of 'what he felt, any otherwiſe than by the 'ſubſequent meaſures which he purſued: 'for he ſhortly afterwards fled his native 'country, and took refuge in France.

'Fortunately, the wounds of the ſer-'vant did not prove mortal. He was taken 'up by ſome humane travellers, and con-'veyed to a place of ſafety; where, by

the exertions of a very eminent ſurgeon, his life was miraculouſly preſerved.

This melancholy incident greatly affected the good old gentleman; who published the offer of a conſiderable reward to thoſe who might apprehend the foul offender: but in vain; no one could trace him; no one even ſuſpected, that Valcourt had aſſumed the diſguiſe of a highwayman to obtain what was indiſputably his own. His ſudden diſappearance was univerſally attributed to the pecuniary embarraſsments in which he was involved. In fact, he became the object of pity, rather than of diſtruſt; becauſe if this event had not taken place, it was evident, that his neceſſities would have been relieved.

After an interval of three months, Valcourt ſent his father a letter, dated from Paris, which unravelled the fatal myſtery. I found it by accident, ſome days afterward, in removing ſome papers; and my

'my curiosity, which I do not now con-
'sider to have been justifiable, prompted
'me to take a copy of it. I have it yet
'in my possession; and, as you have suf-
'fered so very severely through the vile-
'ness of this wicked libertine, I will shew
'it you. But to no other person, not even
'to Mr. Holbin, did I ever disclose this
'transaction.'

Mrs. Holbin left me, involved in astonishment; as well at the baseness of the monster, who had spread desolation throughout our once happy family, as at the extraordinary manner in which this finishing trait of his character came to my knowledge. 'Surely,' thought I, 'if my dear, miser-
'able, ill-fated Henry, had known this,
'his ruin would never have been accom-
'plished!'

The speedy return of Mrs. Holbin, prevented me from sinking under the influence of these heart-rending reflections. This is the letter to which she alluded.

HONOURED SIR,

'MY sudden removal 'from Oxford, and my silence till this pe- 'riod, originated in motives which I dread 'to disclose. Alas! you will abhor me; 'I have forfeited all pretensions to your 'favour; I cannot hope your forgiveness. 'I am every thing that is vile!---I am---- 'the assassin, who robbed, and who shot, 'your servant!--My soul is on the rack 'to know if he fell a sacrifice to my cri- 'minal impatience. Oh! how honestly 'resolute was he, in the defence of his 'trust! what a miscreant I, in not relying 'on your generosity!

'If the worthy man be yet alive, may 'I venture to beg, that, if you cannot par- 'don, you will at least pity me; that you 'will consider my inexperience; and fa- 'vour me with your advice, respecting my 'future conduct in life. If you refuse, 'destruction will follow at my heels;

'perdi-

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'perdition will devour me. —— Oh! by 'what strange infatuation was I possessed! 'Nothing, I trust, but the necessities of a 'Gamester, could have instigated me to al-'leviate them in so inhuman a manner. — 'What a signal punishment attended the 'immediate commission of the crime! The 'ingenuity of torture could not invent 'more exquisite pangs than those I have 'endured. May this consideration have 'some influence on my dear father's hu-'manity! Above all, may it induce him 'to keep this confession a profound se-'cret!' ——

'Good Mr. Valcourt was strangely 'affected at the contents of this letter; 'his surprise and his concern were self-'evident. However, he did not hesitate 'to pardon his son, as the servant was hap-'pily recovered; and, dreading the recol-'lection of the former delay, he remitted 'him a draft on a banker in Paris, with 'orders to return home as soon as he had 'received it. Valcourt complied with

"the will of his father; and, on his arrival, "the old gentleman kept him in close con- "ference for several hours: during which "time, I believe, he severely reproved "his atrocious conduct; for I afterwards "noticed him very earnest in fashioning "his countenance to its accustomed stan- "dard, that the servants might not suspect "him to stand in need of chastisement.

"His father settled fifty pounds a year "on the poor man, independent of his sa- "lary; and I have heard that Valcourt, "since the death of his good parent, has "assisted him to become master of the "principal inn at B..... but whether he "was prompted to this act of justice, by "the best or the worst of motives, I cannot "determine.

"Alas! how I shuddered to hear you "say, that your brother had been seduced "by this unprincipled libertine! I de- "plore, but am not surprised, at the lamen- "table consequences which have ensued!

"Happy,

'Happy, happy would it be for other young men of fortune, if they knew his character! But his manner is so specious; his conversation so enticing; and many of his actions so seemingly generous; that he scarcely ever gives the unguarded cause of distrust.'

Here Mrs. Holbin ended a narrative which I little expected to hear; and which recalled all my affection for the ill-fated Henry, who now appeared less guilty in my eyes. 'Valcourt,' said I, 'was the CAUSE of all; and my brother, in comparison of him, was innocence itself!'—— But how different their destiny!—— Valcourt yet prowls about the world in triumph! and both sexes are alike his prey. — Let me drop this subject for ever. It is essential to my peace, and to the happiness of my dear Edward.

Though I was perfectly recovered of the fever, I still felt its attendant effects. But, notwithstanding, I directed my atten-

tion towards the means of procuring a future subsistence; resolving not to be wholly dependent on the generosity of Mrs. Holbin, whom I was scarcely able to recompense for her past services. I therefore took an early opportunity of requesting, that she would endeavour to procure me a situation as Lady's Maid, in some respectable family; and threatened to leave her, at all events, if she would not coincide with my determined purpose.

This generous woman could not refrain from tears, at the bare mention of a separation. She tried to convince me that I could obtain more than a sufficiency at my needle; and urged me to make a trial, at least for the ensuing winter.

Overcome by her persuasions, I at length consented to continue with her; and I diligently devoted myself to such work as she procured from her friends. But it was not long, ere I discovered, that this excellent woman had contrived to over-

rate

rate the price of my labour, that I might not consider myself to be obligated to her. This delicate instance of affection, embarrassed me exceedingly; I wept, at the idea of being burdensome to one, whom I panted to recompense more highly than was then in my power; and, finally, I resolved to renew my solicitations, that she would permit me to leave her, as soon as the situation could be obtained, for which I had before expressed a predilection.

The fear of being discovered, in consequence of the enquiries which would naturally be made, respecting my family connexions, gave me no little uneasiness; and formed, indeed, the only objection to my design. But here, again, the goodness of Mrs. Holbin triumphed; she at once removed my scruples and my doubts. 'If 'you must leave me,' said she, 'I shall 'not love you the less; and I will not 'fail to make every enquiry, to gratify 'your desire in the manner you have men-'tioned. If it meets your approbation, I 'shall

'shall also say that you are my niece; 'and thus will you avoid the mortification 'of answering unpleasant questions.'

It was now November; and Mrs. Holbin would give me no hope of realising my wishes till the spring. She knew, she said, a young lady of high rank, who resided in the same town, that, early in the ensuing year, would be married to a nobleman; that, after the celebration of the nuptials, they purposed to make a foreign excursion for a few months; that the lady's attendant also meant to become a bride, about the same period of time; and that she had little doubt of procuring me the engagement, if I would wait till these events had taken place.

I thankfully accepted this proposal; and consented to stay with her the remainder of the winter. But, alas! how little did I suspect that, under her friendly roof, aught could arise to alarm or discompose us!

Mrs.

Mrs. Holbin had a son, on whom she doated, and who always paid her the most dutiful attentions. At an early age, he had been sent to sea, in but an humble capacity: however, by pursuing a praise-worthy line of conduct, he had gradually risen to the rank of lieutenant on board a man of war; and, latterly, he had been so fortunate as to acquire a considerable share of prize-money. He was, also, highly distinguished in the service, for his courage and capacity. It was now two years since she had seen him; and it happened, that he came to her embraces, one day, while she was bewailing his long absence, and anticipating the dangers which encompass brave men, in a time of general hostility.

What transports did this worthy mother express, at the opportune arrival of her son! I could scarcely withold my tears, on witnessing this tender meeting.

Mr. Holbin had an expressive countenance; and his general deportment was cal-

culated

culated to create esteem. He was about twenty-eight years of age.—The singular respect which he paid to his mother, ennobled his other good qualities; and, upon the whole, there was no observable defect in his character.

In the course of a few days after this young officer's return, I thought he appeared to be uncommonly pensive: when he spoke to me, I observed that his mind was troubled; and he always concluded as if he had something more to say.

Mrs. Holbin had not imparted to her son my true name, nor the motives which divided me from my family. My father, she told him, was a merchant, who, at that time, resided in America, and that I was awaiting his return.

The Lieutenant wore this doubtful gloom for some time longer; when it changed to a settled melancholy, which he could by no means conceal. Often was I troubled at

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at observing Mrs. Holbin's uneasiness in consequence of this sudden alteration. — O heavens! it seemed as if I had not only been born unfortunate myself, but that I was also destined to invade the happiness of others!

Often did this tender mother entreat her son to disclose the cause of his uneasiness; but vain were her solicitations. It appeared to be a secret that appertained to the soul. To dispel the apprehensions of his worthy parent, he sometimes assumed an air of cheerfulness: but, even then, he betrayed the contrary symptoms of a mind at ease. This poor attempt to deceive his mother, contributed to her anxiety.

One morning early, it happened that she went out to transact some urgent business. I was sitting, alone, in my chamber, meditating on the future and the past; and sighing at the fallacy of human hopes. The portrait of my dear Edward lay be-

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fore me, on the table, which I often snatched up with transport, pressing it to my lips, and sprinkling it with my tears. While I was thus indulging these manifestations of a tender, but hopeless passion, some one demanded admittance. I took up the valued portrait, and concealed it in my bosom: when, opening the door, who should I behold, but Mr. Holbin! — He apologised for what he termed his presumption; and begged that I would give him audience for a few minutes; a favour, he said, which he was induced to solicit, in consequence of hearing my sighs in the adjoining room. He feared that I was unwell. I endeavoured to conceal my discomposure, as I turned to hand him a chair. — I could plainly observe, that his mind was agitated; and that he had something to say of more than common importance. He attempted to speak; but, for a long time, seemed at a loss for expressions suitable to his purpose.

At length, he confessed that all his uneasiness

easiness had arisen on my account: and that he had loved me from the first moment of his arrival. He was also pleased to say, that a consciousness of my superiority, and of his own demerits, had hitherto tortured his bosom. He threw himself at my feet, and beseeched me to make him happy.

O heavens! what new misery did I anticipate! How was my troubled heart again affected! — In the utmost confusion, I assisted him to rise; and, after a few unpleasant moments had elapsed, I replied, as follows.

"Pardon me, Sir, for saying, that I "cannot return the love which you have "professed for me. I must discountenance "your addresses. I cannot encourage your "hopes. — I am unfortunate! perhaps, the "most unfortunate of my sex! And if you "knew the whole series of my misfortunes, "you would, at once, comprehend, and ac-"knowledge, the impossibility of my be-"coming a wife. Believe me, Sir; and

'banish from your mind a passion, to which 'I must not, cannot listen. My heart is 'affianced to another: and yet, to that 'other, have I refused my hand! This is 'the source of those calamities which I now 'suffer; and which I certainly shall not 'long survive.—Yet, this once, Sir, let 'me entreat you to forget me; it is not yet 'too late. Your dear mother, to whom I 'have related all the lamentable accidents 'of my life, will convince you, yet fur-'ther, of the reasonableness of my ulti-'matum. She will tell you, that it was 'impossible for me otherwise to decide.'

'The dread of this, he replied, 'has 'hitherto kept me silent. But, my dear 'Cecilia, I can never forget you! No! 'that is impossible!—Heavens! I could 'as soon forget the dangers that I have so 'often escaped. To forego the pleasure of 'seeing you, is the duty of the unfortunate 'Holbin; and that is, already, my deter-'mination. Forgive me, Cecilia, for as-'piring to an honour, so infinitely beyond

my deserts. It was imprudent to ask it of you. —— The heart should not always permit the tongue to declare its sensations.

Within a few days I shall again depart. I had hoped, henceforth, to live only for you and my good mother. But, alas! I have now discovered that my riches are useless; that they are incompetent to happiness; and that they are no specific for the cruelty of disappointment. ---- The unhappy Holbin will no more insult you with his love: but, instead of that retirement which he had planned, in your sweet society, he will again court the vicissitudes of his profession, and run into, rather than avoid, surrounding dangers: for, without you, he can place no value on existence!

Having said this, he wept bitterly; kissed my hand with great fervidness; and hurried out of the room, without uttering another word.

I remained, for ſome minutes, in the greateſt conſternation: but, when I had collected myſelf a little, I asked the ſervant if her miſtreſs was yet returned. She anſwered, No; and added, that Mr. Holbin was gone out in great haſte. It was but a short time after this, when my beneFactreſs entered the houſe. I begged that she would follow me to my room; having, I told her, ſomething of the utmoſt conſequence to communicate.

When she was ſeated, I diſcloſed to her all that had juſt occurred between me and her ſon. It brought tears into the eyes of this good, this affectionate mother: she preſſed me tenderly in her arms; and declared, that ſuch an union would, truly, have rendered her the happieſt of parents; but that she was conſcious of its utter impoſſibility.

We, at length, judged it eſſential to this young gentleman's future tranquillity, that he should be informed of the circum-

stances which operated against his hopes: and I left the whole to her discretion, after charging her to conceal, or to alter, the name of him to whom I was pre-engaged.

In about two hours after we had so agreed, Mrs. Holbin received a letter from her son, informing her, that, for urgent reasons, he had changed his intention of staying on shore; and that he was gone to arrange, and settle, his affairs, preparatory to the resumption of his former station.

The contents of this letter, added to what had before occurred, were too much for the good, the motherly heart, of Mrs. Holbin: and I assure you, Julia, that, at this moment, I had also my share of affliction. I could not refrain from mixing my tears with those of my protectress. —— 'Good God!' I exclaimed, 'must I, then, 'for ever, destroy the comfort of this ge- 'nerous woman, and her worthy son! —— 'Ah! unhappy Clementina! that imparts 'her sorrows to those who seek to alleviate 'them!

"them! — Is it thus that I must reward "the efforts of benevolence! — Cruel, cruel "destiny!"

As the year was drawing to a close, I reminded Mrs. Holbin of the young lady to whom she had promised to recommend me. She reluctantly consented to wait on her the next day: the ensuing morning, however, it opportunely happened, that Miss Belfield, who was afterwards Lady S....., came into her shop, to purchase some articles. I was then in my room; and presently Mrs. Holbin entered: she requested that I would go below; for that she had already spoken to the lady, in my favour; and that she was waiting to see me. I cheerfully obeyed this welcome summons: when Miss Belfield, who appeared to be amiableness itself, addressed me in the most gentle terms. It was my good fortune to meet her wishes; for she then promised me the situation which I had solicited; and appointed me to call on her in the afternoon, in order to discourse more fully

fully on the subject. I was punctual in meeting her at the appointed time: and she again conversed with me in the most soothing manner. 'Mrs. Holbin,' said this charming lady, 'has told me, that fortune 'has been unfavourable to your hopes and 'expectations: and that you, once, had 'better prospects. It will afford me the 'highest satisfaction, to soften your distress. 'Yes, Cecilia, I shall repose in you the 'utmost confidence: and, in a few days, 'I shall be ready to receive you.'—— Miss Belfield lost her parents when she was very young; and she now resided with an uncle, who had been appointed her guardian. I could not keep the tear of gratitude from bedewing her hand, as I reverently kissed it, when I took my leave.

Two days after this, Mr. Holbin returned; but in a worse state of mind than before. He said, that he had chosen a ship which was ordered on a distant station for three years; declaring, that he could not live in the same clime, where Lewal, without

out offering me his adorations. He looked wistfully on me, and then turned aside, to smother the rising tear. He apologised to us, for retiring to his chamber, saying that he was greatly fatigued with travelling.—Oh! how was I pained at observing the pitiable condition of this generous young officer!

I was, at this time, busied in preparing for my new situation; and, in a few days after the return of Mr. Holbin, taking a tender leave of him and his worthy mother, I set out for the residence of Miss Belfield, who received me, rather as a friend, than a dependant. However, as you are no stranger to her character, I shall withold an enumeration of a thousand incidents that would only tend to shew how much she merits that elevation which she has attained.

When Lord S..... was made happy in the possession of the hand of my amiable lady, I found that, instead of making a foreign

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foreign excursion, they intended to pass the remainder of the winter in London. The day before we departed, I went to bid farewel to my kind benefactress and her son: and I must confess, Julia, that these moments demanded all my fortitude. How was I affected at their earnest solicitude for my welfare. 'Oh! Cecilia!' said the lieutenant, in faltering accents, 'you do 'not know the extent of that happiness 'which I wish you! My mother has 'told me all! And though, possibly, you 'have been more unfortunate than me, still 'you cannot be more miserable.—Let this 'convey some consolation to your bosom, 'whilst it convulses mine!' At length, to conceal his emotion, which increased every moment, he saluted me, cried 'Adieu!' and left us, dissolving in our tears.

I, at length, parted from Mrs. Holbin, after promising to write often to her; and, hitherto, I have faithfully kept my word. Nor will any change of fortune, ever lessen that love and that affection which I imbibed for

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for her in the hour of distress.—That gratitude is illegitimate, which only extends to the exigencies of the moment.

After continuing a few months in London, Lord and Lady S..... fixed on this delightful villa, for their country residence; where, as you already know, I became the happiest of women. My dear Edward is unceasing in his endeavours to efface the stains of sorrow from my memory, and to convince me, that, "whatever is, is right." Indeed, by recurring to my miraculous preservation at M....., where, by a sudden resolution, I avoided those flames which consumed the weary traveller; need we doubt, that, if there is an over-ruling power which occasions human evils, there is also One who renders those afflictions conducive to our happiness; or permits them, that we may escape some more dreadful calamity!

FINIS.

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